

# SHAKESPEARE

— THE —

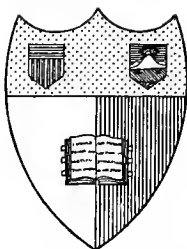
PERSONAL PHASE

By WILLIAM

HALL

CHAPMAN

PR  
2894  
C46



**Cornell University Library**  
Ithaca, New York

---

FROM

The Author

---

---

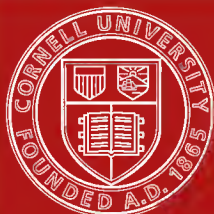
Cornell University Library  
**PR 2894.C46**

**Shakespeare; the personal phase, by Willia**



3 1924 013 147 867

olin



Cornell University  
Library

The original of this book is in  
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in  
the United States on the use of the text.

<http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924013147867>





SHAKESPEARE  
THE  
PERSONAL PHASE









**The Stratford Bust**

**The Droeshout Engraving**

The Presentment of the Two Discrepant (hemispheric)  
Shakespeares





SHAKESPEARE  
THE  
PERSONAL PHASE



BY  
WILLIAM HALL CHAPMAN

TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS

R

A 487259

**COPYRIGHTED, 1920**

**BY THE AUTHOR**

**W. H. CHAPMAN**





In Veneration of the Memory

of my

Father

and

Mother



## PREFATORY NOTE

“Shakespeare” “Shake-Speare” “S h a k - s p e r e” “Shaksper.” The name is spelled several ways. In this work I find it convenient to write the name Shakspere where I am writing about authenticated matter of fact, in no way connected with Plays or Poems, and “Shakespeare” where I am speaking of the supreme dramatist and poet of our modern world, whomsoever he was.

The spelling of the name involves no assumption as to authorship.

In quotations I follow the originals.

I have employed the descriptive term “Stratfordian” merely to point out to those who hold that William Shakspere of Stratford, was the author of the Plays and Poems. without disparagement to any or all of those who hold such belief. .

I have also given some account of the conspicuous events connected with the literary history of England, which took place in the Elizabethan age; and likewise considerable prominence to the resourceful and irrepress-

ible personalities of Ben Jonson, Robert Greene and George Chapman, the three Elizabethan poets now most conspicuously in the midst of Shakespearean criticism, showing their traits of mind and personal phase.

Personality is the only thing about William Shakspeare of Stratford, which the researches of inquirers have not exhausted, as is shown by the discovery of new things about him which the inquirers are unearthing, but which his conventional biographers do not care to disclose unless the fresh views of things accord with their bias or prejudice.

You have never really known a man until you have seen all sides of him; in fact, the most engaging inquiry for the human race is the particular man.

The writer has endeavored to perform his task with freedom from bias, both in the narrative and criticism, and does not hesitate to affirm that a detailed statement of the precise circumstances under which the "cursed-blessed" epitaph was chiseled on William Shakspeare's tomb is essential in order to present the man as he is disclosed by the results of the long struggle, from the autumn of 1614 to the winter of 1618, with the corporation of

Stratford-on-Avon, over the enclosure of the common fields on the outskirts of the town.

Nothing is included in the volume which cannot be readily traced by reference to the Miscellaneous Documents in the Archives of the Stratford Corporation, (Wheler Collection Stratford-on-Avon), "Camden Society Papers." The new documentary information lately discovered among the Belvoir papers and in the Public Record Office, also the standard works on the drama and obvious sources in literature and history of the Elizabethan Age.

It is possible that through inadvertency I have not marked all passages which are not original or new, by inverted commas.

The present writer has endeavored to keep out of the old rutted pathway of conventional biography, based upon Spurious tradition, and has sought to blend interest with instruction. And in giving to his account a fresh and pleasing arrangement.

W. H. C.

*Los Angeles, California*



# CONTENTS

---

## PART ONE

	<i>Page</i>
Prefatory Note	xiii
I. Facts About Shakespeare and Their Significance	3

## PART TWO

II. An Account of the True Personality of the Man William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon, as Shown by the Recorded Facts of His Life	101
---	-----

## PART THREE

III. Shake-speare Shakespeare The Literary Aspect	179
---	-----

## PART FOUR

IV. Shakespeare the Master-Mind with Some Account of Several Elizabethan Authors	241
Ben Jonson and Shakespeare	241
Who Was Shake-Scene? (the object of Robert Greene's censure) - -	281
"That Old Man Eloquent" (George Chapman)—"A bet- ter spirit"	372
INDEX	395





# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Page</i>
THE STRATFORD BUST—THE DROESHOUT ENGRAVING	- <i>Frontispiece</i>
THE HEMISPHERED PRESENTMENT OF TWO DISCREPANT SHAKESPEARES	<i>Frontispiece</i>
AN EXACT REPRODUCTION OF THE ENTRY IN THOMAS GREENE'S DIARY ON THE 23RD DECEMBER, 1614	48a
PORTRAIT OF THOMAS GREENE	- 63
SHAKSPERE EPITAPH	33
THE GROUND BEFORE LONDON WAS BUILT	76a
FIRST PAGE OF ORIGINAL EDITION OF HAM- LET	176a
SHAKESPEARE <i>IN UMBRA</i>	176b
AN EMBLEM IN ART, SCIENCE AND LITERA- TURE	236a
BEN JONSON	238a
THE POETS' CORNER—SPENSER, MILTON AND BEN JONSON	280a
WILLIAM KEMP DANCING THE MORRIS	327
A GROUP OF LONDON AUTHORS OF THE XVII CENTURY	150 - - 280b
AUTOGRAPH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH	366
CRESCENT ARMS OF CHAPMAN	372a
PORTRAIT OF GEORGE CHAPMAN	386a
FACSIMILE RECEIPT FOR 40S. PAID FOR A "PASTORAL ENDING IN A TRAGEDY" FROM CHAPMAN TO PHILIP HENSLOWE	388a
CHAPMAN'S TOMB IN ST. GILES CHURCH	394



## TO THE READER

“Pray thee, take care, that tak’st my book in  
hand,

To read it well, that is to understand.”

—*Ben Jonson*



## PART I

# FACTS ABOUT "SHAKESPEARE" AND THEIR SIGNIFICATION



FACTS ABOUT "SHAKESPEARE"  
AND THEIR SIGNIFICATION.

I.

WE believe that if "the greatest genius of our world" were now living he would wish to be known as he was, so as to qualify for identification with the person who wrote the immortal "Plays." There is only one celebrated man in history called Homer, about whom, in connection with his reputed literary work there is so little known, or concerning whom there is so great diversity of opinion among persons eminent in many walks of life.

"Paint me as I am," said Oliver Cromwell, shaking Sir Peter Lely, the artist, roughly by the shoulder. "If you leave out the scars and wrinkles I will not pay you a shilling." And there on canvas in the Pitti Gallery it is, a present from the many-sided and wondrous Cromwell to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The stern, rough face is marked with every scar, wart and seam which nature, civil strife or anxiety, public care or authority, had featured in the king uncrowned.

But have we adequate materials which show Shakespeare as he was? We cannot build a biography of the person who wrote the "Plays" without literary material. Hitherto the antiquarians have failed to unearth facts which contribute to our understanding or appreciation of Shakespeare. The material in the Public Record Office and Municipal Archives involve no assumption whatever as to authorship, except in so far as the absence of literary facts tend to disprove the claim set up for the Stratford player. They are the primitive and authoritative documents and may be always relied upon as an unbiased record of fact unmixed with the chaff of fiction, legend and spurious tradition.

William Shakspeare of Stratford is indeed an anomaly for there is no other person associated with literature whose biography is so completely devoid of authenticated literary facts; whose activities, so far as known, if not mean are surely not creditable, to a man of letters. Partly from idolatry of the author of the "Plays" facts are omitted or distorted by the conventional biographers of Shakespeare, which in any way reflect on their idol, except where the advantage to the sub-



ject of their memoir seems to outweigh the opprobrium.

We have adequate material which shows Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Chapman, Spencer, Drayton and other Elizabethan poets as they were. And the immortal author of the "Plays" had the same opportunity but did not choose to make himself known as he was.

Unfortunately for the biographers who had not enough material on which to build a biography of Shakespeare, the author of "Richard II" was not discovered at the time of the Essex-Southampton Conspiracy. In 1601, on the afternoon of the day preceding the insurrection, Sir Gilly Merrick, one of the conspirators, had procured to be played as an encouragement to rebellion, the play of the deposing of "Richard the Second." The actor who provided the play was Augustine Phillips, a member of the Globe Theatre, the same person who bequeathed by his Will in 1605,—“to my fellow William Shakspeare a thirty shilling piece of gould.” He was also one of twenty-three persons who, with William Shakspeare of Stratford, was charged with obtaining “heraldic honours by fraudulent representation.”

It is abundantly evident that the "Age of Shakespeare" was the age of craft, of crime. of grief and judicial cruelties. The Court of High Commission, the Star Chamber and the Privy Council, were names of fear and terror. The simplest expression was liable to be regarded as seditious and treasonable, subjecting the writer before conviction, to imprisonment and torture.

In 1599, Sir John Heywood was imprisoned and threatened with torture for the dedication to Essex of a history of the First Part of the Life and Reign of "King Henry IV," which contained an account of the deposition of "Richard II." Ben Jonson and Samuel Daniel were severely censured by authority for supposed expressions of sympathy with Essex, contained in "Sejanus" and "Philatas." Queen Elizabeth denounced the performance of the play "Richard II," as an "act of treason." The Queen's fears were well grounded for not long before the Essex rebellion, an edict (1570) was issued by a foreign potentate inciting her subjects to rebellion. When Peter Lombard, the Keeper of the Records in the Tower, was showing Her Majesty his rolls, on coming to the reign of "Richard II," the

Queen suddenly exclaimed: "I am 'Richard II,' know ye not that?" She told Lombard how the tragedy "was played forty times in open streets and houses" at the time of the Essex insurrection. Loyalty was intentionally undermined and the assassination of the Queen was countenanced. If the fiery, passionate daughter of "the pontiff-king." (Henry VIII—) "the untamed heifer" as the Puritans called her,—had discovered the author of Richard II she would have laid him by the heels. For as things were in Tudor English days if the rebellion had gathered force, and Essex lost control of his followers (the London mob), the Queen would in all probability have been deposed and murdered.

The players were interrogated and it was proved that the performance of "Richard II" was by request. Nevertheless students of Elizabethan literature, when they take up Shakesperean criticism, find it difficult to understand why the author of the play "Richard II" escaped punishment for committing an offense much more serious than any of the author's literary contemporaries, and for which they were imprisoned.

Nash declares that for a twelvemonth he

published nothing for fear of (literary) censure; he had been imprisoned and banished from London, the only place where a professional writer could hope to keep soul and body together. "In 1599, when John Stubbs and the publisher, Page, brought out a pamphlet against the French marriage they were condemned to have the right hand struck off, according to the barbaric Tudor practice, by a blow from a butcher's knife."

No wonder with the dread of authority before him, the author of "Richard II" should have remained in seclusion after his "report what toucheth the deposing of a king".

But there is not a grain of fact which tends to prove that the principal person—the author, (whatever his name), of "Richard II"—suffered for his rashness, or was made known to a distrustful government by the professional informers, called "State Deciphers"—vampires gorged with perjury and sottish with crime.

Yet at or before this time (1601), is the supposed date of twenty-three plays and three poems, which now issue under the name "Shakespeare". The list is inclusive of "Richard II" (1593).

Before or during the year 1603, there was conferred upon the author of the immortal "Plays" (known or unknown), an unusual distinction,—when the play "Hamlet" was acted in the two Universities. We also know that "Volpone" received the same distinction by the grateful acknowledgment of the author, Ben Jonson: "To the most noble and equal Sisters, the two famous Universities, for their love and acceptance shown to his poem (play) in the presentation." Thus acknowledging the authorship of "Volpone" in the dedication of it and himself.

Surely this would have been the time of the Stratford Player's life had he written "Hamlet", for the opportunity it gave him to show himself without jeopardy, as he was, and link his name and fame indissolubly as the author of the immortal work, with the two famous Universities. But most unfortunately for the biographers and critics, the author-poet's silence is *prima facie* evidence of concealed authorship. The fact of the matter is the pseudonymous author could not dedicate both "Hamlet" and himself without disclosing his identity. However, the manner of man he was cannot be discovered by an en-

deavor to identify the author with any of his dramatic personages, although to the present writer the name "Shakespeare denotes those ageless and immortal "Plays" and almost nothing else.

But we may pursue the examination of the particulars of the life of one William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon, for the reason that many persons still believe that these particulars of the life of the Stratford Player were identical with the author of "Hamlet" and "King Lear", who in their opinion is still one of the great personalities of the past.

Nevertheless there are many distinguished persons who question the claim set up for the Stratford Player to the personal authorship of the "Plays" and poems associated with his name, and who assert that critical acuteness and antiquarian research have ousted him from possession of the works called "Shakespeare".

As the Greeks of the olden times failed to establish the identity of the one Homer, author of our "Iliad" and "Odyssey" (according to the traditional view), so the moderns are having no better success in establishing the identity of the one "Shakespeare" as author

of the "Plays" and whether or not the poems and plays imputed to William Shakespeare were really written by a person of that name.

The late Mr. Andrew Lang says,—“I cannot believe that the actual author “Shakespeare” lived and died and left no trace of his existence except his share in the “Works” called “Shakespeare”. But we know as in the case of “Junius” it did happen, and who Martin Mar, prelate, positively was has never been ascertained. Nor is the mystery likely to be solved as to the authorship of the “Sibylline Oracles”. However, we reserve what is to be said about pseudonymous authorship for another place, but it may be noted in passing, that if a trace of the actual author of the Plays is ever found it will bear the literary mark or impress like the tracings of all literary men of the time, instead of the litigious trace of the usurer.

William Shakspeare of Stratford has been traced, and it is this very tracing of him—deed by deed—now here, now there, his actions and his ways, which prove the utter undoing of his reputation as the author of the works called “Shakespeare”. It is a very easy matter to trace him in his endeavor to sieze

the common fields; in his falseness and venality in bribing the officers of Herald College to issue a grant to his father, but do the notices and particulars of the Stratford Player's match-making intermediations, litigious and common-field grabbing proclivity complement the works called "Shakespeare", as the appurtenances of author-craft.

By way of contrast, see how in Beaumont, Chapman, Drayton and Ben Jonson, individuality and work are linked together; supplying the consummation for their history is the complement of poetry and author-craft, while the converse instances in the history of the Stratford actor are the complement of strolling player, money lender, speculator and the like. "To be told that he played a deception on a fellowplayer," the narration of which would sully these pages, or that he died of a drunken carousal, does not, says Hallam, "exactly inform us of the man who wrote 'Lear'."

Emerson could not marry the Stratford player's life to "Shakespeare's Verse," for the actual facts of the Stratford Player's life add opprobrium to his character—the complement of what is called low activities.

"Into the dark," says Mr. Lang, "go one



and all, Shakespeare and the others." The strictest scrutiny, however, fails to disclose the truth of this statement. "Into the dark go one and all"—that is taking Spencer, Fletcher, Drayton, Chapman, Beaumont, Ben Jonson and several others; for in the literary particulars of their lives they are most manifest. It is not the fewness in the number of notices, which must necessarily be small, that should awaken comment, so long as the notices are native and complementary to the character of literary men.

The late Mr. Andrew Lang is a writer who was possessed of much more than miscellaneous and general erudition, and not so amateurish in the matter of Elizabethan literary history as he would have his readers believe. For we find him taking part in the scrimmage going on in the camp of the Stratfordians cudgeling professionally trained students of literary history, like Sir Sidney Lee and Mr. Churton Collins of his own fellowship, on points concerning "quartos," "The First Folio," and on "Shakespeare's" learning, although his thrashing over the old straw in connection with the illustrious "Verulam" seems inconsequential.

It is fine sport, however, to witness the Stratfordians at odds among themselves, for their divarication is plainly specified in the use made of their knowledge, as professionally trained students of Elizabethan literature, in proving that the camp of the Stratfordians divided against itself can stand almost any amount of derisive laughter, on account of the divergences of opinion touching Shakespeare's learning. As an exemplification, Sir Sidney Lee holding the opinion that "Shakespeare" had no claim to rank as a classical scholar, Mr. Andrew Lang and J. M. Robertson concurring. At the same time, that irresponsible Stratfordian, Mr. Churton Collins, points out that the works of Shakespeare evince the ripest scholarship, and Professor Byness is of the opinion that he (Shakespeare) was a trained classical scholar. "Shakespeare's vocabulary," says Sidney Lanier, "is wonderfully large. It does not seem to have occurred to those who have thought him an unlearned man that whatever words he uses he must have read, for words are wholly artificial products and cannot come by intuition, no matter how divine may be our genius." The late Dr. Furness says of Shake-

speare, that he must have been an "omnivorous reader."

The "Shakespeare" Plays, according to Walter Bagehot (1826-1877), "show not only a very powerful but also a very cultivated mind."

The upholders of the Stratfordian faith feel the pressure and force of the evidence in striving to off-set the obvious inference of illiteracy in the Stratford Player by harping on the inexact scholarship of the author of the "Plays." However, very many students of literary history assert that Shakespeare was abundantly lettered.

We cannot resist a shaking of the sides with laughter in seeing the ardent J. M. Robertson pitted against the members of his own school (Stratfordians), "as cocks in a pit," over the proposition as to the legal knowledge shown in the Plays, and who, like the parson in "Hudibras," strives to "prove his doctrine orthodox by Apostolic (forensic) blows and knocks."

Happy thought! Why are the Shakespeare classical scholars so irreconcilably at variance in opinions of Shakespeare's learning if they are to be regarded as professional-

ly trained students of literary history? How delighted we all would be if Shakespeare—whomsoever the dramatist might be—could have collaborated in “Eastward Hoe” with Chapman and Ben Jonson, and with them committed to a vile prison and been in danger of having his nostrils split, or at least his ears clipped, for this would have disclosed Shakespeare’s identity. As one of the imprisoned poets he would doubtless have written one or more of the Letters of Chapman and Jonson concerning “Eastward Hoe,” seeking their release. George Chapman wrote to His Majesty, King James I, also two letters to the Lord Chamberlain. Ben Jonson wrote to the Earl of Pembroke, to the Countess of Rutland and the Earl of Salisbury.

The supposed date of “Eastward Hoe” is 1604, but the first quarto version of the play—the only one which contains the passage in which the authors poke fun at the Scots—appeared in 1605, and for which George Chapman and Ben Jonson were cast into prison. Those years also contained the supposed date of “Othello,” “Macbeth” and “Lear.”

However, there is no ground for belief that the author of the “Plays” (Shakespeare)—al-

ways a recluse from public notice—would collaborate, for the conditions of anonymity are irreconcilable with the certified authorship of Chapman, Marston and Ben Jonson in "Eastward Hoe."

The author of the immortal "Works" hid his fame in silence, as if conspiring against an illustrious name and wondrous renown. "Shakespeare" is as impersonal and descriptive as is Homer, and as misty and mythical as is the name and personality of William Tell.

When the claim to authorship is challenged, as in the case of the Stratford Player, the smaller the number of notices non-literary the better for the one taken to be claimant. But instead we find the notices of William Shakspeare, the Stratford Player, unconnected with literary work, superabundant; traits and actions not literary, by their excess and predominance tend to prove the literary delusion associated with the Stratford actor's name, for we have practically no authenticated literary facts but are swamped with notices of him not associated with literary work, such as we find recorded by Shakespeare's biographers.

Degrading as many of them are, instancing

the new discoveries unearthed by the antiquarians, they have placed the reflective Stratfordians in a quandary. For as late as 1613, after all the immortal plays were written, when the Stratford actor (whom many readers still identify with The Great Unknown playwright—the pseudonymous “Shakespeare”) was supposed to have returned to Stratford, instead “Mr. Shakspeare” is discovered at Belvoir Castle with Richard Burbage, his yoke-mate and fellow-worker in and about “My Lord’s Impreso” or device.

In 1905 was discovered the Earl of Rutland’s account book of household expenses incurred at Belvoir Castle, for the year beginning August, 1612, and ending August, 1613. It had lain concealed for more than three centuries and contained an entry showing in the year 1613 “Mr. Shakespeare” was engaged with Richard Burbage to work at the Earl of Rutland’s new device or emblem, and that each received a sum of forty-four shillings in payment of their services.

Mrs. C. C. Stopes is unwilling to believe that the Stratford actor, who in her opinion was the author, was in 1613 engaged in work in no way related to literature, and with Dr.

C. W. Wallace is struggling to relieve "Shakespeare of the mingling of petty business with the production of the noblest dramas of human life ever written."

Contrast "Mr. Shakspeare's" non-literary employment at Belvoir Castle, the seat of the Earl of Rutland, "about my Lord's 'Impreso,' with that of George Peele, poet and dramatist, at Theobald, the seat of Lord Burleigh. "Peele was employed to compose certain speeches addressed to the Queen, for payment. Also when the Earl of Northumberland presented him with a fee of three pounds for addressing literary tributes." Is it not wonderful that the Shakespeare of the Plays, if well known to such men as the Earl of Essex, the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Rutland, persons of aristocratic birth, with a position in court circles as some Stratfordians assert (without proof), that he did not mention the name of any one of them, or the name of any poet or author of his time?

William Shakspeare of Stratford, we know left behind him no literary correspondence, his life history is non-literary; as an humble actor his acts, and all that he did histrionically considered are compressed into scantiest

record. There were three hundred and thirty-two contemporary poets, enumerating those only whose works were published. Of all these but five or six obscure writers refer to "Shakespeare" as a personality, more or less vaguely in the lifetime of the Stratford actor. All other reference is to the "Shakespeare Works," author unknown.

While Shakspeare of the stage was living, Ben Jonson maintained silence be it remembered,—not so much as the least commentary upon him until he had lain for years in the grave. But when Ben died in 1637 he left in manuscript the statement that he "loved the man" (Shakspeare). Why not say so while both are in the flesh if in the opinion of Ben Will *was* the author.

However, Ben Jonson's panegyrics hyperbolizing Shakespeare in prose and verse are to a great degree what the Stratfordians rely upon.

"Though merely writ at first for fill-  
ing  
To raise the volume's price a shill-  
ing."

The plain, unvarnished truth of the matter is the "Shakespeare" Plays were not thought



wonderful in the time of Queen Elizabeth and King James I, and almost any person in that age could have been set up as claimant and passed unchallenged, so little were dramatic productions regarded. Plays were referred to as "riff-raff"—"lewd and lascivious plays."

However, the Stratford actor was not seriously suspected during his lifetime of any authorship whatever, so far as anyone knows and can prove, but seemed always cherishing the lust of gain. All the conventional writers on the subject of Shakespeare have been put into a quandary or puzzling predicament, by the mean biographical facts and non-literary environment during the entire life of the reputed author, disclosed by an unbiased view of his whole career. As an instance, when he as marriage-broker or intermediary, gave support to an old wig-maker in bilking his apprentice; and when he, a pitiless money-lender and usurer, without any tenderness for his debtors, had the borrower sent to prison for a picayunish sum of money; and when he, with two other common field-land sharks, strove to dispossess the poor people of their rights in the tithe-paying land rights dear to many a poor widow and her fatherless chil-

dren, struggling in their distress and need against the buffeting of a pitiless world.

The reader's discernment perceives the formidable difficulties in the way of the "Stratfordians," who believe the author of the "Plays" to be the young man who came hiking up from Stratford, who was thereafter a shareholding actor in a London Playhouse, and returned to Stratford in the very prime of manhood; who never claimed to be the author of the "Plays" or gave any directions for their publication.

The Shakespeare Plays owe their perpetuity chiefly to the student reader in the closet and not to the stage, where the Plays were mutilated and still bear the tracings of histrionic savagery, perpetrated before and after the publication of the folio of 1623.

For eight and twenty years within the precincts of the Inner and Middle Temple, the name and writings of Shakespeare were unknown. "Whatever the cause," writes H. H. L. Bellot, *The Inner and Middle Temple*, p. 196, "the fact remains that out of the twenty plays produced in our Hall from the accession of Charles II to the flight of his brother (James II), not one can claim Shakespeare

as its author. Beaumont and Fletcher are responsible for six." "The Twin" dramatic stars were very distinctly marked in Jacobean times.

What have the legal craftsmen of the Inns of Court found wanting in "Shakespeare?" He touches all there is within the scope of human thought.

"For his bounty there was no winter in't, an autumn 'twas that grew the more by reaping."

Whatever the efficient cause the truth remains, that the members of this great legal University, successors to the illustrious Order of the Knights Templar, knew little of the Plays called "Shakespeare." And that little is made manifest by the discovery in 1828, among the Harlian manuscripts at the British Museum, of the diary of a student of the Inn.

John Manningham, barrister-at-law and a cultured man, on the 2nd of February, 1602, writes: "At our feast we had a play called 'Twelve Nights, or What You Will.' This performance formed part of the revels which immediately followed the Christmas revels." There is contained in the diary or note book the sole anecdote of Shakespeare (Shakspere) known to have been recorded in the Stratford

actor's lifetime. But like all other authenticated notices of him it is non-literary. "However, the 'Wine and Woman' story contained in the student's note book is very good evidence of reputation," writes Sir George G. Greenwood. About the authorship, Manningham says nothing, which proves that the Plays were not then conspicuously associated, if at all, with the Stratford actor's name.

Among the fellow students of John Manningham was John Pym, the celebrated statesman and orator. "He is of a sweet behavior, a good spirit and a pleasing discourse," writes the diarist. Another fellow student, John Ford the playwright, was admitted a fellow of the Middle Temple in 1602; also the famed poet, Dr. John Donne, educated at both Universities and at Lincoln's Inn; Francis Beaumont, the eminent dramatist, was admitted to the law society on November 3, 1600, and might have been present also when 'Twelfth Night' was produced. Thomas Campion, masque writer, was educated at Gray's Inn; William Camden and William Dugdale, the great and learned antiquaries, were both members of Gray's Inn; Sir Philip Sidney was a member of Gray's Inn; so were John Hamp-

den, Sir Francis Bacon and Thomas Middleton, playwright. Sir Walter Raleigh, who was admitted to membership of the Inn in 1575; James Shirley, the poet and play maker, was a member of the Legal Inn.

Is it not very extraordinary that in an age of great men and great deeds, and much epistolary correspondence, there is no mention of the actual author of the immortal Works, by way of commentation, exposition or observation? While the Plays of Shakespeare were subjects for stage representation in the lifetime of the Stratford actor by illustrious men, no effort was made to illustrate the individual life by the eminent persons who may well have been present to witness the plays produced in this stately Hall of the honorable societies of the "Inns of Court," and where for many generations they lived and wrought in literature, law and history within the precincts of this historic spot.

Is it possible that the great advocate, John Seldon, Thomas Shackvill, Chancellor of Oxford, the indomitable Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Chancellor Hatton, Sir Thomas Overbury, Sir Francis Drake, Sir Edward Coke, Sir Francis Walsingham, or Henry Wriothes-

ley, third Earl of Southampton, would not if they had witnessed the presentation of Shakespeare's Play as it left the author's hand unabridged, glorified him and it?

However, it is impossible not to recognize the fact that Shakespeare was above the capacity of the playhouse loving, bear-baiting, beer guzzling, rough-and-tumble, fighting public of that day, of whom it was said "they will eat like wolves and fight like devils." All of which is to the meditative student, painful and disgusting.

With the play-reader, however, Shakespeare is always at his best, for he gives his readers all the delight which the music of his words contained, and in his unaltered works convey all the poetry of it. Every kind of eloquence, ancient and modern, is present to our mind in the reading.

But with the play-goer Shakespeare is at his very worst for there is so much in him which comes not within the sphere of acting but may come under the province of histrionical savagism, in the stage representation so pawed over, abbreviated and bemuddled by declamatory actors to please the general auditory.

The fact is they cut him then as they cut him now, by the omission of many of the most striking passages in the plays, but with this difference, that in the olden time they expunged the parts more frequently which alone will be treasured to the latest ages. Such as the Roman orations, Clarence's dream, Portia's beautiful tribute to the quality of mercy, and the many lines so richly jeweled by the poet's "vision and faculty divine." Proof of which is the omission in all acting editions of the great speech in "Hamlet," Act IV, Scene 4,—"the one especial speech," as Swinburne phrased it, "in which the personal genius of Shakespeare soars up to the very highest of its height, and strikes down to the very deepest of its depth." It was written, he says, not for "the stage but for the study."

Shakespeare is very beautiful in the reading but no dramatist-actor would cast such pearls before the Tudor and Jacobin public playhouse swine. We infer this from the fact that no person in that age did set forth the majesty and loftiness of Shakespeare's thought. In fact, the "Shakespeare" Plays were above the intelligence of the frequenters of the public playhouse. No play was given

as Shakespeare wrote it, but a good deal abbreviated for stage production, and an abridged version made for the stage retains all the slang expressions and wanton interpolations of the actors, who delight in the nonsensical jargon of the punster. Much of this "sad stuff" was placed under the immortal author's *nom de plume*, "Shakespeare."

Is it not strange that there should be extant the record of but two persons who ever witnessed a presentation of a probable Shakespeare Play? An astrologer, one Dr. Simon Forman, noticed three, namely: "The Winter's Tale" at the Globe Theatre, May 15th, 1611, "Cymbeline" (time and place not given) and "Macbeth" at the Globe, April 20th, 1610; and "Twelfth Night" noticed by John Manningham, a member of the Middle Temple, February 2nd, 1602. The name "Shakespeare" is not contained in either of their note books in connection with plays or poems.

Are we to infer that a well educated barrister-at-law, a member of the Inns of Court, would have been indifferent to its authorship had he known that the writer of this mirth-producing play, "Twelfth Night," was the author who speaks from the mouth of An-



tony above the body of Caesar? Are we to understand that if the Roman play, "Julius Caesar"—a play which contains those splendid monuments of genius and eloquence, the speeches of Brutus and Antony—had been presented on a stage at that time, or at any time in the Hall of this ancient legal university, that the benchers, barriers and students of these law societies, would not have given in their note books a more ample commentary?

"You all do know this mantel: I remember  
The first time ever Caesar put it on—  
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,  
That day he overcame the Nervii:  
Look! In this place ran Cassius' dagger through;  
See what a rent the envious Casca made;  
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed,  
And as he plucked his cursed steel away  
Mark how the blood of Caesar followed it."

When reading these immortal lines Emerson cast no beam on the "jovial actor and Sharer." He says, "other admirable men have

led lives in some sort of keeping with their thought, but this man in wide contrast. I cannot marry this fact to his verse."

Shakspeare the Stratford man is not in harmony with "Shakespeare" the poet. The player's life was never reflected in the poet's works, as he led a life in wide contrast to the poet's thought. Identifying the Stratford player with the author of "Hamlet" is to give the poet a character made up of incongruities manifestly incompatible. It is the work that is immortal, the personality of the author is as mythical as is Homer.

## II.

Our belief in the pseudonymity of the author of the poems and plays called "Shakespear-ean" is strengthened by the absence of verse commemorative of concurrent events, such as the strivings of his boldest countrymen in the great Elizabethan age. There is from his pen neither word of cheer nor sympathy with the daring and suffering warriors and adventurers of that time, although his contemporaries versified eulogies to the heroes of those days for their stirring deeds. There is in the poems and plays no elegiac lay in memory of Eliza-

beth—"The glorious daughter of the illustrious Henry," as Robert Greene called her, "and that great queen of famous memory" is the more exalted praise of Oliver Cromwell. Nor is there one line of mourning verse at the death of Prince Henry, the noblest among the children of the king, by a writer who was always a generous and consistent supporter of prerogative against the apprehension of freedom.

This is another evidence of the secrecy maintained as to the authorship of the poems and plays. We cannot discover a single laudatory poem or commendatory verse, or a line of praise, of any publication or writer of his time.

All this is in contrast with his contemporaries whose personalities are identified with their literary work, and so liberal of commendation were they that they literally showered commendatory verses on literary works of merit, or those thought to have merit. Of these, thirty-five were bestowed on John Fletcher, a score or more on Beaumont, Chapman and Ford, while Massinger received nineteen.

Ben Jonson's published works contain thir-

ty-seven pieces of commendation. His Roman tragedy, "Sejanus, His Fall," was acclaimed by ten contemporary poets. In praise of his comedy "Volpone" there are seven poems. The versified compliments bestowed on him by his contemporaries embrace many of the most celebrated names antecedent to his death, which occurred in 1637.

Early in 1638 a collection of some thirty elegies were published under the title of "Jonsonus Virbius" or "The Memory of Ben Jonson," in which nearly all the leading poets of the day except Milton, were represented. "How different," wrote Mr. J. A. Symonds, "was the case of Shakespeare."

It must appear strange to the votaries of Shakespeare, who make the player one with the playwright, that Ben Jonson should have received so many crowns of mourning verse while for Shakspere of Stratford, the now reputed author of "Hamlet," "Lear," and "Macbeth," there wailed no dirge. Not a single elegaic poem written of him in the year of his death, 1616. Already in that fatal year there had been mourning for Francis Beaumont. Eight and forty days after the death of Francis Beaumont all that was mortal of Wil-

liam Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon was buried in the chancel of his parish church, in which as part owner of the tithes, and consequently one of the lay rectors, he had the right of interment. Over the spot where his body was laid there was placed a slab with the inscription in an odd and strange mixture of small and capital letters, imprecating a curse on the man who should disturb his bones:

GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,  
TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOSED HEARE:  
BLESE BE <sup>E</sup>Y MAN <sup>T</sup>Y SPARES THES STONES,  
AND CVRST BE HE <sup>T</sup>Y MOVES MY BONES.

Shakspere's Epitaph.

At any rate the words contained in this epitaph clearly identify Shakspere the player, but manifestly not in the manner of "Shakespeare" the playwright. For we know that had the author of "Hamlet" written his own epitaph it would have been as deathless as the one over the Countess of Pembroke:

"Underneath this sable hearse  
Lies the subject of all verse;  
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother,  
Death ere thou has slain another  
Learned and fair and good as she,  
Time shall throw a dart at thee."

There was not the least danger that the actor's grave would be violated by the Puritans, for Dr. John Hall, Shakspeare's son-in-law, was a Puritan. If he had had this warning epitaph cut on the tomb it would have been written in scholarly English. The doggerel lines, rude as they are, satisfied doubtless the widow and daughters—as expressing a known wish of their “dear departed.” Themselves ignorant they could not read the absurd and ignorant epitaph on his tomb, so their hearts were not saddened as they gazed upon an inscription of barbaric rudeness.

The tradition that William Shakspeare of Stratford wrote his own epitaph and commanded that it be engraved upon his tombstone stands undisputed, for the very good reason that his son-in-law, Dr. John Hall, a Christian gentleman and scholar, consented to the profanation of a sanctuary in having this mean, ignorant and disgusting epitaph chiseled in the pavement of “that temple of silence and reconciliation.”

In the olden time the parochial authorities of Trinity Church had no rights which the wealthy tithe owner and lay rector, William Shakspeare, was “bound to respect.”

In reading the four protective lines cut on the tomb, which contain a warning, a blessing and a curse, it is impossible to avoid seeing that the maledictory words point at the exhumationist of his own generation. Herein the Stratford actor manifests his usual shrewdness, for he had offended the good people of Stratford in an endeavor to rob them of their ancient rights in "the common fields." In striving to snatch bread from the children of the poor doubtless gave William Shakspeare an opprobrious name among the towns-people of Stratford and he felt that his bones should have all the protection that a malediction could give. He was shrewd enough to provide, as he imagined, for any contingency, hence he had his blessing for "the man that spares these stones" and a curse for "he who moves my bones."

Who wrote Shakspeare's epitaph? We don't know positively, but who should wish, or would dare, or be permitted to imprint upon Shakspeare's tombstone a curse without his authority "Aye There's the Rub?"

Mr. Holliwell-Phillipps tells us that these lines "according to an early tradition were selected by the poet himself for his epitaph."

He adds that "there is another early but less probable statement that they were the poet's own composition."

If this "mean and vulgar curse" had been traditionally handed down instead of having been cut in stone and laid upon Shakspeare's grave it would have been rejected as spurious by the Stratfordolaters. But there the curse-inscribed stone rests and has apparently rested on Shakspeare's grave for more than three hundred years.

Seventy-eight years after Shakspeare's interment, William Hall an Oxford graduate, in 1694 stood beside the grave and after he had read the rude, absurd, and ignorant epitaph, wrote his Commentary contained in a letter to his friend, Edward Thwaites, preserved in the Bodleian Library. The letter has brought to light the significant fact concerning the depth of Shakspeare's grave, "they have laid him full seventeen feet deep, deep enough to secure him."

The execrative epitaph cut on his tomb is a criminating memorial of his attempt to gain possession of the Stratford Common lands.

No wonder Shakspeare and family were scared, for the years 1615-16 saw insurrection



and pitched battles. The townsmen were struggling with the rioters to prevent the enclosure of the Corporation tithing-lands, while the riotous henchmen of the Combe Shakspeare land-grabbing Combination were digging ditch-fences around the land they intended to enclose, in defiance of the public weal and "the law of the realm." Shakspeare knew how extremely bitter had been his fellow townsmen's state of mind, whom he had offended during the two years' struggle, he was not "one of them," and of course loved by few.

The people of his day were superstitious; the epitaph was to them the voice of the dead. Mr. Holliwell-Phillipps writes, "whatever opinion may be formed respecting the authorship of the lines upon the stone there can scarcely be a reasonable doubt that they are a record of the poet's (actor's) own wishes." However, there is much that is inexplicable about Shakspeare's interment. His name does not appear upon the grave-stone pointed out as his; there is no distinguishing inscription on it—nothing in fact but those execrative lines.

The Countess de Chambrun writes "person-

ally, I consider these lines (epitaph) almost as much an exemplification of their author's genius as more poetic works." When reading these sentences of the talented lady, I feel constrained in Socratic phrase to address her thus: "Best of Women, pardon me for asking you to examine the miscellaneous documents extant among the Stratford archives where are disclosed the fact that these dreadful lines are not an exemplification of their author's genius, but of their author's shrewdness in having his grave guarded by a malediction after having tried to rob his home town of its common field rights. In Stratford's dusty records we may read about things done, deeds that fit into the known facts of the life of William Shakspeare of Stratford—when and where was Poet's bones."

"Spurned from hallowed ground

Flung like base carrion to the hound."

The Poets' tomb in every age are the object of veneration.

How does this jibe with or exemplify, Shakspeare's traditional reputation—so-called—for gentleness of spirit and good-will? With his sympathies and winning disposition? That it should have been found necessary to exert

a protecting influence in the village where he was born and where he had lived all the time of his youth, where his children were born, where his father, mother and son were buried, and where after life's short eventide they bore him to that quiet resting-place in the chancel of his parish church. That there should have been so little respect shown, much less honor and reverence, to those bones that were Shakspeare's, if the immortalities were really written by the Stratford actor.

Be the cause what it may, not one of the three hundred and thirty-two contemporary English poets sought shelter for his ashes under the aegis of malediction.

If in pressing his claim the money lender elects to be a tormentor and a common-field vandal (1614-1616), his name will be execrated while living and a hateful memory when dead, so the curse-inscribed slab was placed over Shakspeare's grave as a shield to protect his ashes from those who would not hesitate to invade the tomb of one whose memory had become hateful to them.

One thing is evidenced by the maledictory epitaph, that the one who wrote it was afraid

the tomb might be violated by the removal of the bones.

Who were they that would most likely invade Shakspeare's tomb? Obviously the poor people who regarded the Stratford actor as a grasping usurer, a hard-hearted man who pressed poor debtors with all the rigor of the law, to enforce the payment of petty sums, the man who had shown himself supremely selfish in an attempt to enclose the Stratford common lands, the man who would be made a gentleman by misrepresentation, fraud and falsehood. However, the awful malediction makes this fact known that the desecration of Shakspeare's grave was thought more than probable, for he threatens his fellow-townsmen with a curse should they disturb his bones—"you will be blest if you do not, but accursed if you do."

It seems an extraordinary anomaly to many persons, who believe that the Stratford actor was the author of the only instance of a poet or author having his grave guarded by a malediction. "Lines which have in them," writes Washington Irving, "something extremely awful."

Go visit the sacred spots, "temples of silence

and reconciliation," where lie or are commemorated the poets in every land of song. Some there were who mingled too strenuously in the strifes of the day, like Dante and Milton, who might have thought that their enemies would not let their bones rest in peace, but nowhere do we find their dreamless dust resting beneath a "stony register" imprecating a curse on the man who should molest his bones.

Away with all this nonsense about Puritans, clerks and sextons snatching Shakspeare's bones out of his grave in the chancel and flinging them into the bone yard! Why then, was Shakspeare haunted with the thought that the exhumationist would disturb his bones?

The reason why is disclosed in the "Corporation Records," "Green's Diary," "Wheler Collection Stratford-on-Avon." F o r h e r e may be found in dusty records the facts which the biographers of Shakspeare are striving to shun, in order to keep "Shakespeare" as they imagine, from going into the limbo of exploded myths.

As a matter of fact, if William Shakspeare had died in the early months of the year 1614, before the great excitement and riot at Strat-

ford, respecting an attempted enclosure of the neighboring common fields, the guardian lines would never have been cut on his tomb, for Shakspeare could then have had no fear that his tomb would be disturbed. But in the autumn of the year Shakspeare became implicated and disgracefully involved with Combe and Mainwaring in an attempt to enclose the common fields, which belonged to the Corporation of Stratford. At the time of Shakspeare's death the strife was extremely bitter. Thirty-four days before he closed his eyes, a petition was sent up by the Corporation of Stratford to the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke, who was on the Warwickshire Assize and a champion of popular rights, standing like a stone wall against the contumacious resistance which William Combe, William Shakspeare and Arthur Mainwaring were offering to the authority of the Corporation. And in reply the Chief Justice declared from the bench at Warwick that no enclosure should be made within the parish of Stratford for it was against the law of the realm.

This order was confirmed on the same circuit two years afterwards. "By whose Charter of Incorporation (Edward VI), the Coun-

cillors and the Bailiff, Francis Smyth Sr., say the common fields passed to the town for the benefit of the poor, wherein live above seven hundred poor which receive almes, whose curses and clamours will be poured out to God against the enterprise of such a thing."

Nevertheless, the three land cormorants, Combe, Shakespere and Mainwaring, were in no complying mood and they proceeded in defiance of their orders, to throw down the banks and to cut up the four hundred acres of corn land into pasture fields.

The Stratford common fields, known as Stratford field, Bishopton field and Wilcombe field, contained altogether about 1600 acres; Wilcombe field contained about 400 acres.

Against the threatened invasion of the land sharks the Corporation showed a splendid resistance. "The town councillors of Stratford were determined to preserve their inheritance, they would not have it said in future times they were the men who gave way to the undoing of the town—all three fires were not so great a loss to the town as the enclosure would be as an injury to the town charities and tithes."

On December 23rd the Council drew up

two letters to be delivered in London, one addressed to Mainwaring, who resided in London and was represented in Stratford by one Replingham, and who like Combe and Shakspeare knew all about the state of high excitement and valiant commotion at Stratford; and the other to Shakspeare, who resided in Stratford but was now in London part of the time. But instead of assuming a protective attitude toward the people Shakspeare gave his fellow-townsmen a stout resistance. It is recorded of him that the latest moments of his life were dedicated to the pursuit of the nefarious scheme known as the enclosure of the Stratford common fields in defiance of the public interest.

In all that stands for the repression of popular rights William Shakspeare of Stratford showed himself to be as perverse as was his confederate, William Combe, the new Squire of Welcombe, who proclaimed his succession to his father's lands and his power as a petty magistrate by arbitrarily sending a person (one Hicox) to Warwick jail, and refused bail merely because he "did not behave himself with such respect in his presence it seemeth he looked for."



The matter contained in the subject of the enclosure at Wilcombe set forth in the details of the hard struggle, is preserved in the Stratford Records, where it is represented in its proper color.

Notwithstanding the dark ways and vain shuffling by conventional writers of "Shakespeare's" so-called "Lives," the true personality of the Stratford man, Shakspeare, is best shown by the recorded facts of his life more especially contained in the subject matter of the attempted enclosures at Wilcombe, 1614-1618 (Wheler Papers) Corporation Records.

The Charter granted by Edward VI to the Corporation of Stratford-on-Avon settled on it the tithes for the support of the refounded school and almshouses. The year 1614 was as direful as any in the history of the old, thatched-roof town. For the third time in twenty years Stratford had been "greatly ruined by fire."

There died in July that year (1614), just about the time of the Great Fire—July 9th—John Combe, the usurious money-lender and notorious litigant, who for thirty years kept the local court of record busy with suits to recover small debts, who was Shakspeare's espec-

ial friend and to whom he left a legacy of five pounds.

The passing of a usurious money-lender in "spacious time" when the law gave a generous advantage to the creditor and its vile prison to the breadwinner of the poor man's family, was very good cause for rejoicing, for then life for the lowly became more nearly worth living, for there was one tormentor the less.

Notwithstanding his litigious course John Combe, a confirmed bachelor, was probably the best member of a family of hard creditors. Two brothers, a sister, many nephews, nieces, cousins, uncles and aunts, were all bountifully remembered in his will. However, the people of Stratford derisively condemned his then un-Christian practice of lending at the rate of ten per cent, and his rigorism in the pursuit of defaulting debtors.

"Here lyes ten in the hundred  
In the ground fast ramn'd,  
'Tis a hundred to ten  
But his soul is damn'd."

(Camden's *Remains* 1614)

But it was John Combe's testamentary bequests which proved so trying to the souls of the good people of Stratford. His nephew,

Thomas Combe, was his heir and residuary legatee and he succeeded to a large part of his uncle's vast property, and in connection with his rantankerous brother, William Combe, forthwith started enclosures at Welcombe. The four years' struggle that followed was the bane of Stratford and the opprobrium of Warwickshire, from the autumn of 1614 until squelched by the Court's order in 1618. But before starting these nefarious schemes of enclosures, two months after their uncle's death they had their henchmen inquire who were most likely to be tempted (bribed).

Thomas Greene drew up a list of the "Ancient freeholders" in Old Stratford and Welcombe. Shakspeare heads the list and was one of the chief holders of the tithes; his share was worth sixty pounds a year. Shakspeare, previous to the attempted enclosures at Welcombe, had purchased of the elder Combes 127 acres which joined the coveted common fields, and in approving of the scheme of enclosures and giving it a lift, Shakspeare was like the farmer who asserted,—“I ain't greedy 'bout land, I only just want what j'ines mine.”

The Corporation, depending on the common lands of Welcombe which were tithe

producing, for the maintenance of its seven hundred poor who received alms, saw in this scheme (the threatened enclosure), a reduction of tithes from which were endowed their school and almshouses. No wonder the invasion of popular rights was fervently resented by the Corporation. It would only be through the tithes that Shakspeare might sustain loss as his interest in the tithes may be depreciated. So then, at the outset of the common land grabbing scheme, William Combe, through his "man Friday"—one Replingham—on October 28, 1614, drafted "Articles" guaranteeing Shakspeare from prospective loss, and at Shakspeare's suggestion the terms were to include his cousin, Thomas Greene, Town Clerk, although not told at the time but subsequently he records in his Diary:

9 Ja (1614) Mr. Replingham 28  
October articed with Mr. Shakspeare  
I was put in by T Lucas.

"The Miscellaneous Documents" and report of the Council meetings at the Town Hall give details of their actions (Wheler Papers at Stratford, 1806).

Thomas Greene, Town Clerk, makes an entry in his Diary on the 23rd December, 1614:

Primi. Staffner

[illegible]



"A (at the town) Hall Letters wrytten one to Mr. Maneryng annother to Mr. Shakspeare with about all the Companys hands to either. I also wryte of myself to my cosen Shakspeare the coppyes of all our oathes made then also a note of the inconveniences wold grow by the Inclosures."

See insert page for the exact reproduction of the entry in Thomas Greene's Diary on the 23rd December, 1614.

"The inconveniences" about which Greene wrote may be anything that disturbs comfort, impedes progress, giving trouble or entailing suffering. For enclosure would have caused decay of tillage, penury, depopulation and the subversion of homes. Both of the letters to Shakspeare have disappeared, that to Mainwaring has been preserved, for there is a contemporary copy in Thomas Greene's handwriting of the letter to Manwaring, doubtless the counterpart of that to Shakspeare is extant among the Stratford archives. (Wheler Papers).

Thomas Greene was appointed steward of the Court of Record, Stratford-on-Avon on

September 7th, 1603. There was no town clerk then, the steward did the duties until the office of town clerk was created in 1610. He conducted the Addenbroke prosecution, 1608-9, at which time he was living in Shakspeare's house New Palace. He was a Councillor of Middle Temple and a solicitor in whose diary and correspondence we find allusions to his cousin Shakspeare, but nothing in regard to Poets, Play-wrights, Poems or Plays.

In November (1614), Thomas Greene, Clerk of the Council, proceeded to London to present a petition to the Privy Council. Within twenty-four hours of his arrival he called upon "Cosin Shakspeare" and writes in his Diary:

"Jovis 17 Nov (1614) My Cosin Shakspeare comyng yesterday to town I went see him how he did He told me that they assured him they ment to enclose noe further then to Gospell Bushe and soe upp straight (leavyng out part of the Dyngles to the Field) to the Gate in Clapton hedge and take in Salisburyes piece and that they mean in Aprill to survey the land and then to gyve satis-



faction and not before and he and Mr. Hall say they think ther will be nothyng done at all."

The entry shows that Shakspere had a talk about the enclosure with his son-in-law, Dr. Hall, and the upshot of the matter was that they had reached the conclusion that "ther will be nothyng done at all."

Those who have read as many books as myself, called A Life of "Shakespeare," will not be surprised to find this entry perverted by the garbler of quotations by means of the convenient expedient of substituting "*should*" for "*will*."

And then as though it were the correct reading say that Shakespeare (Shakspere), "is taking things easy."

However, the Corporation had no such assurance for they were not permitted by the Combe-Shakspere Camp "to take things easy" as the attempted design of enclosure not only incites public disturbance at home but stirs the nation.

What a time for "taking things easy!" Eighty-five houses and many huts had of late been burned and were still smoldering. In the midst of extremest desolation hundreds of

people in his native village were without shelter, depressed by the sickening sense of homelessness and children's cries, pinched with want of food; fathers and mothers who had shared the sports of his childhood evoking the memories of home which years have no power to stifle. Surely their cry of distress and need should have been a check upon Shakspeare's greediness, whether or not he was the poet and dramatist.

There is no reason to suppose that Shakspeare was much of the time in Stratford while its inhabitants were in a state of high excitement, although he is supposed to have severed all connection with the company at the Globe (Theatre). But it seems probable that Shakspeare, according to Dr. C. W. Wallace, retains his lodging at the wig-maker's, one Mountjoy, who lived at the corner of Silver and Mugwell Streets, London. Although living idly with the wig-maker in Silver Street "the region of money," Shakspeare had little inclination to slip out of London and mingle with his tumultuous and riotous confederates. He is too prudent a man to do such a thing as that; he means to deprive the people of their

rights in the common fields in such a way as to keep his own person in perfect safety.

During the struggle a brave fearlessness distinguished the faithful town clerk, Thomas Greene, as a champion of popular rights who records in his Diary how the one who drew up the "Articls" tempted him:

"On Wednesday being the 11th day (January) At night Mr. Replingham supped with me and Mr. W. Barnes was to beare him company when he assured me before Mr. Barnes that I should be well dealt withall confessing former promesses by himself Mr. Manynyng and his agreement for me with my Cosen Shakspeare."

Mr. Mainwaring referred to, like Shakspeare, co-operated with Combe Brothers, and writes Halliwell-Phillips,—“had been practically bribed by some land arrangement at Welcombe.” How about Shakspeare?

Inasmuch as the Aldermen in those letters to Mainwaring,—which is doubtless a counterpart of the one to Shakspeare under date December 23, 1614,—say: “We here that some land is conveyed to you in Welcombe and that you intend enclosure.”

Bribed or not Combe, Mainwaring and Shakspeare "were acting in unison when restrained by the Court's order against them." In such a juncture had Shakspeare been a man of the people—"one of them"—it is certain the Corporation would never have addressed a letter of remonstrance to him on the subject of enclosures, for he would not have countenanced an attempted enclosure of the common fields; but instead should have brought an action on his own account against Combe brothers, not only for trespass but for the depreciation of his profits as tithe-owner legally due him, for he had bought the 32-years lease of part of Stratford tithes, and also a suit against them in the Star Chamber for riots. But instead Shakspeare showed a stubborn resistance in his opposition to his fellow-townsmen in their struggle to preserve their inheritance, and a determination to "feather his own nest" by making conditions with Mainwaring and Replingham (who were acting for Combe), which secured himself from all possible loss by approving of, and helping forward a scheme to fleece poor people of Stratford of their ancient common fields.

Shakspeare and Mainwaring it seems, were

fighting the Corporation on a contingent fee, but Combe and his coterie having lost the case they got nothing—for the land arrangements at Welcombe, if any were promised, were never fulfilled. But nevertheless, had it not been for their great wealth the four rapacious disturbers of the public tranquility, William and Thomas Combe, William Shakspeare and Arthur Mainwaring, would have received in all probability a good sousing in the Avon for their attempt to strip the town of its rights in the common fields by starting an insurrection, and a jail sentence to boot.

In the time of Elizabeth the *Great* and James the *little* they had a summary and cruel way of dealing with poor men, and a protracted and tender way of dealing with rich men. The bailiff, Francis Smyth, Senior, and the Counselors, in the letter on December 23, 1614, to Mainwaring, which is—say writers in no wise partial to heresy—the counterpart of that to Shakspeare.

"We here that some land is conveyed to you in Welcombe and that you intend enclosure. We entreat you to call to mind the manifold great and often miseries the Brough hath sustained by casualties of fires fresh in memory

and now of late one dying in the ashes of desolation" (and beseech you Mr. Mainwaring) "in your Christian meditation to bethink you that such inclosure will tend to the great disabling of performance of those good meanings of that godly King (Edward VI) to the ruyn of this brough wherein live above seven hundred poor which receive almes whose curses and clamours will be poured out to God against the enterprise of such a thing." (Wheeler Papers).

When the dreadful fire took place in 1614, Shakspeare was fifty years of age, and his memory unfolded the succession of frightful fires, 1594-1598-1614, all within the short time of twenty years. His kinsman, Thomas Greene, Clerk to the Aldermen, amidst these distressful scenes of desolation wrote a private letter to "my Cosen Shakspeare." The cold, raw wind wailed mournfully on that drear Christmas morning of 1614, when amid present gloom he kindled Shakspeare's mind with the memories of a terrible past. How that for the third time the Corporation was forced to petition the Queen for the remission of taxes, the homeless people calling for shelter and food. And now the Corporation is asking to

be relieved of the care of their seven hundred poor which received alms, and if the riotous Combe, Mainwaring and Shakspere are not restrained by order of Court the Corporation will be forced to petition the Queen for permission to collect for their poor in the neighboring towns and counties. For enclosures at Welcombe meant decay of tillage in the common fields, a reduction of tithes from which were endowed their school and almshouses and repair of bridge.

The year 1615 saw the storm of battle rise with pitiless fury. Just at that time the leader of the band of rioters, Mr. William Combe, had been made High Sheriff of the County, charged with the conservation of the peace and the execution of the mandates of the courts. But instead, the very officer commissioned by the Crown to prevent riots, was himself engaged in a riot and had the audacity to question my Lord Chief Justice's authority. No wonder that in the petition of the 27th of March, 1615, the Corporation asked that the High Sheriff should be restrained. Thomas Greene says in his Diary on the 5th December, that six of the company (himself among them) were to "go to Mr. Combe and present

their loves and desire he would be pleased to forbear the enclosing. They went on the 9th. Mr. Thomas Combe said 'they were all currs' and spoke of spitting—one of the dogs."

Thomas Greene writes "that on 7th January William Combe had told Baylis that some of the better sort ment to go and throw down the ditches," (ditch fences), round the land Combe, Mainwaring and Shakspeare attempted to enclose, and added,—"I would they durst in a threatening manner with very great passion and anger." Nevertheless, some of the corporation went themselves to prevent a breach of the peace and filled in the ditches. They were personally maltreated by the gang of rioters, Stephen Sly, a servile assistant among them, said that "if the best in Stratford were to go there to throw the ditch down he would bury his head at the bottom." William Combe said, "They were a company of factious knaves they were puritan knaves and underlings in the colour and he will do them all the harm he can." However, while the battle raged the remainder of the ditches were being filled in by women and children.

On the 12th of January (1614-15) Mr. Replingham, spokesman for Combe, Main-



waring and Shakspeare, came to the hall hoping to bring over the company to give consent to their wicked scheme, but the bailiff said he would never agree to their nefarious scheme as long as he lived. Then Mr. Replingham wanted him to bind some of the inhabitants over to good behaviour. Thomas Greene said he would not bind them for all his Clerk's fees. The sturdy honesty of the Town Clerk is here manifest.

On the 25th of January Mr. Chandler and Mr. Daniel Baker went to London for the Corporation to take an attorney's opinion as to legal action, and on the 24th of February they took Chief Justice Coke's opinion. On the 22nd of March Mr. Chandler, for the Corporation, did present a petition to the Lord Chief Justice at Coventry and William Combe, leader of these disturbers of the public peace, called him (Chandler) a knave and a liar to his face.

The Lord Chief Justice bade Chandler remind him of the case when he came to Warwick on the 27th (1615). When reminded by Chandler, and in reply to a petition from the Town Council on March 27, 1615, the Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke, declared from the

bench at Warwick that the enclosures set at defiance the law of the realm: "that noe enclosure shall be made within the parish of Stratford for that yt is agynst the Lawes of the Realme neither by *Mr. Combes nor any other.*"

On the 12th April Mr. Alderman Parsons reported that he had been beaten by Mr. Combe's men and the tenants complained that they had been railed at by Mr. Combe for plowing on their own land within the intended enclosure. The Corporation told Mr. Combe that they desired his good-will but they would ever withstand the inclosure for, said they, "We are all sworn men for the good of the Borough and to preserve their inheritance therefor they would not have it said in future time they were the men which gave way to the undoing of the town and that all three fires were not so great a loss to the town as the enclosures would be."

On 21 February, 1615-16, the Corporation agreed that the charges to preserve their inheritance should be defrayed out of the revenue. The Corporation had been forced into great expense. They sent the Town Clerk, Thomas Greene, often to Warwick and to

London and all because of William Combe and William Shakspeare's rapacious greed and insatiate money-hunger. William Shakspeare was the only one of the four persons conspicuously engaged in the struggle to wrongfully dispossess the Corporation of its rights in the common fields, in defiance of the Court's orders who was a native of Stratford-on-Avon. Mainwaring resided in London, the Combes came to Stratford from North Warwickshire.

There were as many as thirty tithe owners, the largest, Richard Lane, having an interest worth eighty pounds to Shakepere's sixty pounds—Shakspeare having the next largest share. But unlike Shakspeare, Lane was friendly to the cause of popular rights; this may be inferred inasmuch as the Corporation addressed no letter of remonstrance to him on the subject of enclosures.

Thomas Greene, Town Clerk, says in his Diary that the "Company had written through him to Mr. Mainwaring and to Mr. Shakspeare." Unlike "my cousin Shakspeare," the Town Clerk, Thomas Greene, took prompt and effective action in behalf of the townsmen who had reposed trust in him, in refusing to approve or help the land-grabbing scheme

forward, "*and was much excepted to for his opposition.*"

The exceptioners were the disturbers of the public peace, Combe, Mainwaring and Shakspeare, for they defied the law of the realm in their nefarious attempt to enclose the common fields "within the parish of Stratford." The faithful Town Clerk's "*opposition*" may account for the fact that his lawyer cousin, Thomas Greene, was not remembered in Shakspeare's Will.

It should be noted when Shakspeare set about making his Will his kinsman, Thomas Greene, a well-informed lawyer who held the office of Town Clerk, and who acted as solicitor and counselor for the Corporation, became Judge of the Stratford Court of Record and Clerk to the aldermen who had recently acted as his (Shakspeare's) legal adviser in the matter of the Stratford enclosures at Welcombe. Advice which Shakspeare we know did not accept. He was manifestly wrathful and sought the services of Francis Collins who was practicing at Warwick, and was much in the esteem of the Combe family. Note the fact that Thomas Greene, who gave Shakspeare legal assistance in the Addenbroke and

Barker suits was still residing in Stratford at the time of the making of Shakspeare's Will, but his services were not sought in the drafting and he was not a legatee under Shakspeare's Will as was Francis Collins.



Thomas Greene.

Thomas Greene, Shakspeare's lawyer cousin, was counselor at law of the Middle Temple, was admitted to that Inn on November 20, 1595, and was called to the bar on October 29, 1600, but did not quit Stratford till 1617, a year after his kinsman William Shakspeare's death, when he became identified with London and attained considerable eminence at the metropolitan bar, becoming autumn reader of

his Inn in 1621 and treasurer in 1629. (Middle Temple Branch Book).

We are not surprised that no mention was made in his will of his cousin Thomas Greene, who was still vigorously opposing Shakspeare's attempt to enclose the common land of the town, at the very time the document was signed, March 25, 1616, by William Shakspeare of Stratford in the presence of five neighbors.

Nor is it a matter of surprise that Thomas Combe, hot from the field of strife at Welcombe, enraged at the resistance shown by the townsmen, was commemorated by Shakspeare in his Will: "To Mr. Thomas Combe, my sword." With energy he was still pressing his own and Shakspeare's pretended right to enclose the borough's common lands adjoining the town. The Thomas Combe who was William Shakspeare's especial friend and confederate, the domineering adversary of the townsmen, who when asked by the aldermen and the Town Clerk "to for bear the enclosing", said "they were all curs" (cowardly dogs).

What became of Shakspeare's sword? Its legatee, Mr. Thomas Combe, directed his ex-

ecutor by his Will, dated June 20, 1656, to convert all his personal property into money and to lay it out in the purchase of land.

It has never been a matter of surprise to me that Thomas Combe, an old brother in arms, should have received Shakspeare's trenchant blade, for it is not strange that Shakspeare should not recall the history of trials, privations, sacrifices and bloodless scenes, through which he knew Thomas Combe, the younger nephew of his old friend John Combe, the notorious usurer and litigant, had passed at Welcombe.

There was still room for the execution of heroic deeds for there was hope that the women and children, who were then busy with shovel and hoe filling in the ditches, might be made to falter and blench, while they on the contrary, quailed not but laughed at the shaking of Shakspeare's sheeny sword.

However, Thomas Combe's Will shows that the legatee, forty years after his beneficent friend's death did not highly regard Shakspeare's bequest. Why? Surely no confirmation here of the identification of the Stratford man's non-literary personality with the supreme poet of our modern world.

William Shakspeare bequeathed sums of money wherewith to buy memorial rings for four townsmen and three "fellows" or players, but did not extend his testamentary benefactions to his wife's relations, the Hathaways. The slightness of his regard for his wife's family is marked by his contemptible remembrance—a paltry legacy to her by an interlineation of his second-best bed, with the furniture. No Will except Shakspeare's is known in which a bed *forms the wife's sole bequest*. He had also *barred her dower* under the terms of the Will, he had excluded her from the enjoyment of ownership after his death of her home.

Although Shakspeare scattered pieces of money pretty freely by his Will among his friends and acquaintances, only one ungenerous bequest, the rich man's mite, the sum of ten pounds "unto the poor of Stratford." But not a single bequest to poet or playmaker under the Will. This fact taken in connection with many other pregnant facts in which more is implied than penned, speak negatively of Shakspeare's association with the poets.

Thomas Greene, Town Clerk, notes in his



Diary, (September, 1615): "Mr. Shakspeare telling J. Greene that I was not able to beare the enclosing of Welcombe."

J. Greene was the Town Clerk's brother John, to whom were spoken the latest recorded words which Shakspeare gave expression to in September, 1615, a little while before he went down to the grave.

There is a class of writers who read into this entry in Greene's Diary in, "I was not able" as, "he," to suit their predetermination to read Shakspeare into the record as a champion of popular rights. They read into Shakspeare not the things he really did but the things they thought should fit into a poet's life, assuming the thing they vainly endeavored to prove.

Why the September entry should have been chronicled at all, writes Halliwell-Phillips, is a mystery. We see nothing puzzling or hard to understand in the last observation—September, 1615. The wording of the entry implies that Shakspeare told John Greene that his brother, Thomas Greene, the writer of the Diary, was against the enclosures. Shakspeare had learned of the Town Clerk's continued hostility to the nefarious

scheme from Mr. Replingham, the agent of the combine, who could doubtless have been heard telling Shakespere, Mainwaring and the Combes—parties to an association of four persons—to commit an unlawful act, all about Thomas Greene's continued opposition to the scheme of enclosure and how he was schemingly tempted; how much excepted to for his opposition to the scheme of enclosure by the land vandals (1614-18); and how he spurned the price of corruption.

Nevertheless, the Town Clerk could not be swerved the breadth of a hair from the line of his defense of the town. The aldermen had reposed trust in him, surely the Corporation must have been proud of their bribe-less Clerk, who notes in his Diary:

“At Warwick Assisses in Lent 1615-1616 my Lord Justice willed him (W Combe) to sett his heart at rest he should neyther enclose nor lay down any earrable nor plow any ancient greensward.”

Rowe, Shakspere's first biographer, who had not read the Miscellaneous Documents at Stratford-on-Avon, and, of course, knew very little about the subject of his memoir,

observes that "His pleasurable Wit and Good-nature engaged him in the acquaintance and entitled him to the friendship of the Gentlemen of the neighborhood amongst them it is a story almost still remembered in that Country that he had a particular Intimacy with a Mr. Combe, an Old Gentleman noted thereabouts for his Wealth and Usury."

We learn from the Records at Stratford that Shakspeare had a particular intimacy also with two of the old gentleman's nephews, William and Thomas Combe, disturbers of the local peace; who play the autocrat, who torment and bully the poor and who flatter and bribe the rich. The nature of which disclosed by the entries in Greene's Diary and the Corporation Records:

"7th April, 1615, being Goodfryday Mr. Barber comyng to Colledge to Mr. T. Combe about a debt he stood surety for Miss Quyny, W Combe willed his brother to shew Mr. Barber noe favour and threatened him that he should be served upp to London within a fortnight (and so yt fell out)".

Mrs. Quinley failed to meet the obligation. Thomas Barber had become surety for the loan and asked for some time in order to meet the liability. Combe Brothers, however, would show Mr. Barber no favour but threatened to send him to jail. The cruel prosecution here noted by the Town Clerk crushed Mr. Barber's fortunes, his health was shattered and his wife was buried August 10, 1615. Broken-hearted he followed her to the grave five days later.

On September 5th, Green's Diary shows that Shakspeare sent for the executors of Mr. Barker (Barber), "to agree as ye said with them for Mr. Barber's interest."

I fail to see in Shakspeare's action a philanthropic intent, "but instead a Speculator's intent," and not, as Sir Sidney Lee puts it, "benevolently desirous of relieving Barber's estate." But more especially to help his friend and militant associate, Thomas Combe, secure the repayment of the loan which he had made Mrs. Quiney and which Barber became surety for, expediting with the least possible loss in time and money.

Thomas Greene notes in his Diary, "Charges of Mr. Barber and Mr. Jeffrey in

riding to London for search in the rolles for my Lord of Essex's patent." The Town Clerk's entry notes the fact that Thomas Barber, who was described as a gentleman of Shatterry and was thrice bailiff of Stratford, in 1578, 1586 and 1594, had done work of importance for the Corporation.

The eminent and indefatigable Mrs. C. C. Stopes writes, "It had always been a matter of surprise to me that Thomas Greene, who mentioned the death of Mr. Barber, did not mention the death of Shakespeare." (Shakspeare). It is a matter of surprise indeed, seeing that his kinsman, Thomas Greene, had been his legal advisor for so many years, whether "cousin Shakspeare" was or was not the poet in question.

Is it not also a matter of surprise that Thomas Greene—Shakspeare's cousin—never alludes to him as poet or dramatist. In fact, no one among his many Stratford friends, neighbors and relations ever did. The omission of Shakspeare's name in his son-in-law's (Dr. Hall) book of "*Cures*" is a matter of surprise. "This was the one great failure of his life," says Mrs. Stopes (Shakspeare's Family p. 82). Dr. Hall never alludes to his

wife's father as poet or dramatist.

Mr. Stevenson's discovery of the Steward's book of the household expenses incurred at Belvoir, by Earl of Rutland, from Aug., 1612, to Aug., 1613, is also matter of surprise and disappointment to the scholarly Mrs. Stopes, because "Mr. Shakspeare" is discovered in a situation inconsistent with the activities of a poet, who instead of writing sublimest songs and immortal plays was engaged with Dick Burbage working at the Earl of Rutland's new device—a mere triviality—for a paltry sum of forty-four shillings.

"It did not quite fit into the known facts of the poet's career," says Mrs. Stopes, when the fact is it fitted to a Tee into "the known facts" of the life of "him who sleeps by Avon." There is nothing puzzling in the entry when read as written in the Account of Thomas Screven, the Earl of Rutland's clerk:

"1613, Item 31 Mortii, to Mr. Shakspeare in gold about my Lord's impress XLIII JS; to Richard Burbage for paynting and making yt in gold XLII JS—LIVII JS."

The practice of substituting "poet" for the name Shakspere of Stratford by the Strat-

fordians in their writings when referring to the Stratford "Miscellaneous Documents," Greene's Diary, Wheler Papers, contained in the Stratford Archives, is as reprehensible as was the amplifications of Jordan and the fabrications of Steevens in a vain attempt to prove a Stratfordian authorship. No Stratford record contemporaneous with him contains a reference to Shakspeare as a poet or writer.

When the Greeks of the olden time spoke of Homer they did not at all times call him by name. They said the poet. We might thus speak with as much assurance when the author of the immortal plays, "Shakespeare," and the author of the great Greek epics, "Homer"—who are about equally shadowy and about equally pre-eminent—are allowed to take rank under pseudonymous names.

William Combe, the chief rioter, continued to live a long time. He died at Stratford on January 30, 1666-7, at the age of eighty, nearly fifty years after his defeat, and was buried in the Parish Church where his co-militant friend, William Shakspeare, lies buried; where a monument commemorates him also, but not fearfully guarded by the calling down of

curses. However, William Combe was fortunate in the time of his death, half a century after he sued for pardon, but withal most fortunate in making money, which enabled him to keep out of prison on paying a fine of four pounds and the expense of restoring the lands to the condition in which they were in the summer of 1614.

If William Combe was fortunate in the time of his death when his warfare with his neighbors was over, then his friend and confederate, William Shakspeare, was unfortunate in the time of his death in the midst of the struggle. It is true that Shakspeare dying in 1616, was spared the humiliation of a summons to appear before the Privy Council for contumacy. On the other hand, Combe's family and friends were spared the necessity of having to chisel an opprobrious epitaph on the tomb to prevent distinterment. For had William Combe made his exit from this world when William Shakspeare did in 1616, or at any time during the struggle from the autumn of 1614 to the beginning of 1619, in order to preserve his tomb from desecration, his family like the Shakspeare family, would probably have inscribed on it a maledictory



epitaph though not in the Stratford-Shakspeare doggerel. For unlike the Shakspeare family the Combe family was versed in scholastic learning. William Combe had entered the Middle Temple on October 17, 1602, though not called to the bar.

Unlike William Combe, who journeyed all the length of life's long eventide, taking the last slow steps with staff and crutch, William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon, when the end came had passed but a little way beyond the noon-time of life. Yet he had lived too long. Had he died in the early months of the year 1614, before the riot, the opprobrious doggerel epitaph would never have been cut on Shakspeare's tomb.

This was the life Shakspeare chose to live when he strove to deprive the little thatched-roofed town where he was born, of rights reaching back beyond the memory of tradition.

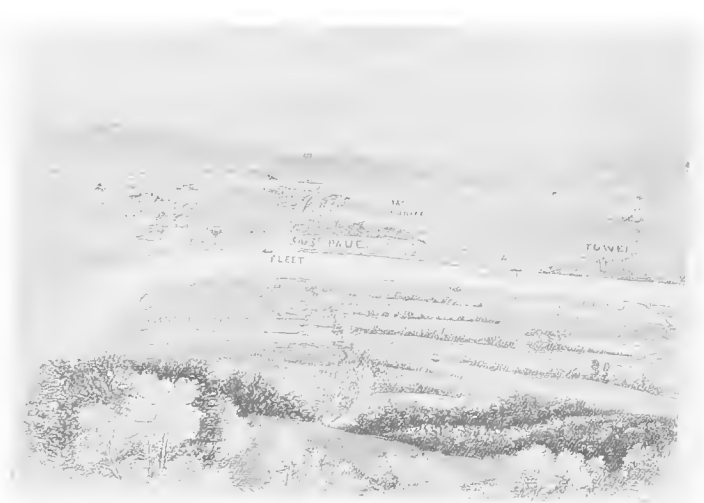
In the autumn of the year 1615, when the end was near at hand, Thomas Greene, Shakspeare's attorney and kinsman, penned his last note in connection with the subject of enclosures. Shakspeare then had but seven months to live before he saw the last of earth

on April 23, 1616, a few months after the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke, had reiterated his warning.

The contemptuous expressions of the people may have been audible in the death chamber at New Place, since William Shakspeare of Stratford chose to live in a way that gave offense to the poor of his native village, so that they manifested hatred towards him. We are warranted in believing that his remains were followed to the grave by some persons having a desire for revenge, and it must needs be that his bones should have all the protection that a mean and coarse epitaph in a superstitious age could give.

So then, in order to preserve Shakspeare's grave from desecration, the Church Wardens permitted the profanation of his parish church by a malediction. And for the same reason Shakspeare's scholarly, Puritanical son-in-law, Dr. John Hall, permitted this rude, ignorant and boorish epitaph to be engraved on the tomb, said by certain persons of the "Stratfordian faith" to have been written by Shakspeare himself.

Surely Shakspeare could have no fear that his grave would be violated by the Puritans,



THE GROUND BEFORE LONDON WAS BUILT



or by clerks and sextons. But that this haunting fear shown in his epitaph was imparted by the lowly dwellers in hovels, who although heavily burdened with poverty, show a constant determination to resist Shakspeare's invasion of their rights.

In Mr. M. R. B. Wheler's "History and Antiquities of Stratford, 1806," "The Stratford Corporation Records" and "Green's Diary," are contained the salient particulars of the life of William Shakspeare of Stratford, which his biographers dare not relate or his votaries chisel on Shakspeare's stone. How the months of that fatal year was spent, how he and his confederates spared no effort to despoil the dwellers in huts where the ills of life upon the poor are heaviest,—

"A shattered roof—a naked floor,  
A table—a broken chair,  
And a wall so blank, their shadow  
they thank  
For sometimes falling there."

### III.

I call to remembrance my first introduction to "Shakespeare," in my earlier days "a long time gone." It seems but a little while ago

when at a book-stall I exchanged a piece of money for a volume containing all the Plays usually published under the name "Shakespeare." Beginning with Hamlet, I read the Plays for the first time and marveled at the wealth of literature contained in them, the author's singular mastery of general erudition, prodigious intellect and transcendent intelligence, and felt constrained to read the Life of the supreme poet of our modern world and learn the facts of his career recorded by his supposed biographers. These should clearly interpret his character to us and make Shakspeare's life harmonize with "Shakespeare's" Works, and in this manner establish the identity of the Stratford Player with the Playwright. So I began the search in the pages of his earliest narrator, Nicholas Rowe, who tells us out of the mouth of Thomas Betterton, the actor, all that he knew about Shakspeare personally, in less than five thousand words—mere prattlement of no biographic interest of a literary kind, unless the mean doggerels about a usurious person, one Combe, be regarded as such.

The seventeenth century biographer, who was himself a dramatist and poet-laureate to

Queen Anne says—"I must owe a Particular Obligation to him (Betterton) for the most considerable part of the passages relating to his (Shakspeare's) Life, which I have here transmitted to the Public, his veneration for the memory of Shakespear having engaged him to make a journey into Warwickshire on purpose to gather up what remains he could, of a Name for which he had so great a Value." In the latter years of Queen Anne, Thomas Betterton "is the chief glory of the stage."

Now what were the gleanings gathered from the sheaves of the actor which places Rowe under "particular obligation"? Rowe, the mouthpiece of Betterton, told the after-date tattle of his day more than a century of years after date. That "He (Shakspeare) had by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company, and amongst them some that made a frequent practice of Deer-Stealing engaged him with them more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, near Stratford.

"For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, to that degree that he was obliged to

leave his business and family in Warwickshire and shelter himself in London."

Notwithstanding young Shakspeare seemed to be struggling with the meanest necessities of life, still I cannot agree with his first biographer that *Will* was a game thief, or as Archdeacon Davies says, was "much given to all unluckiness in stealing venison and rabbits, particularly from Sir Thomas Lucy, who had him oft whipped and sometimes imprisoned."

Now is it a fact that getting into scrapes is common enough to young fellows like Shakspeare that had been three years married, who was about twenty-one years old and the father of three children? However, the abandonment of wife and children should have been more bitter and grievous to him than the accusation of game thief.

That the deer-stealing yarn has a solid basis of fact, or that it accords with attendant conditions, is I think groundless.

However, we realize the seriousness in the position of one who finds himself the father of three children, the two youngest twin-born, he himself still a minor (under age), and destitute of money. Withal, his father in danger



of arrest for debt, no mistake whatever the cause. *Will* was in a desperate situation when he went hiking up to London shortly after the baptism of the twins. In connection with, and apart from Shakspeare's improvident marriage, we gather from subsequent events the facts which clearly interpret his character to us; facts however, which do not embrace the deer-stealing story and which is now with many writers on the subject of Shakespeare an adjunct of Shakespeare's biography, a settled belief with them which does not they say, admit of a reasonable doubt. But does it make, or help to make an obscure and profane life, to harmonize with the immortal verse? The passage in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" was probably the source of the fiction instead of a reference to the fact. Getting into scrapes by robbing a deer park, an orchard, a melon-patch or hen-roost, does not furnish a motive strong enough to induce young Shakspeare to forsake his wife and children, and all this under no severer penalty than three months' imprisonment.

Most all the biographers of Shakspeare condone the game stealing of his younger days, but several of them fail to see anything that

imparts a moral obliquity when Shakspeare in his elder days strove to practice land-grabbing in the enclosures of the Common fields.

“ ’Tis bad enough in man or woman,  
To steal a goose from off a Common  
(field)  
But surely he’s without excuse  
Who steals the Common (field)  
from the goose.”

Sir George G. Greenwood however, tells us that “Deer were animals *ferae naturae*, and as such were not the subjects of larceny at the Common law. It was criminal to take them in a royal forest, but of that there is no question here. Further there were statutes which made it an offense to kill deer in a park impaled.” (See 5 Eliz. C. 21). We know that for many generations the students of Oxford had been the most notorious game-thieves in all Britain. Sir Philip Sydney’s MAY LADY terms deer-stealing, “a pretty service,” and Bacon says, “It is a sport proper to the nobility and men of better rank, and it is to keep a difference between the gentry and the common sort.”

The law of Shakspeare’s day (5 Eliz. C 21), punished deer-stealers with three months’ im-

prisonment and a payment of thrice the amount of the damage done.

About forty years after Rowe's first effort to illustrate Shakspeare's individual life was given to the public in 1709, George Steevens, the game-cock of commentators, plunged into Shakespearean criticism and gave the public that digest of biography, his wee-little life of Shakspeare, which was the second attempt, if so it may be called. Notwithstanding Steevens erudite accomplishments and antiquarian knowledge, he was not inquisitive in the matter of Shakespeare's personal history, so the material for its composition (Shakspeare memoir), was drawn from facts in the main recorded by Rowe, and it consists of the following forty-five words:

"All that is known with any degree of certainty concerning Shakspeare is that he was born at Stratford-on-Avon, married and had children, then went to London where he commenced actor and wrote poems and plays, returned to Stratford, made his will, died and was buried."

On the other hand later biographers require hulky bulky volumes to record their spurious traditions and idle conjectures.

Steevens does not repeat the so-called poaching story, which is said to have occasioned *Will's* flight to London, or the satirizing tom-foolishness about a "Mr. Combe, an old gentleman noted for his wealth and usury"; nor is there any allusion to that old chestnut (the thousand pound tale), which has become fishy; no bolstering up the Southampton-Shakespeare fellowship, although now a feature in all fanciful Shakespearean biography.

But whenever this irrepressible literary "errant-knight" found the antiquaries and professionally trained students of literary history priding themselves on unusual discernment or critical acumen he hoaxed them unmercifully.

And furthermore, it is creditable to Steevens that he strove to facilitate the attention of Shakspeare's biography by cutting out much of the guess-work and such stuff as the manufactured biographic legends, although his effort in this direction was offset in part by his own hoaxings.

Rowe says: "The later part of his ('Shakespeare's') life was spent as all men of sense will wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement and the conversation of his friends."

Now the fact is Rowe knew nothing about the way the latter part of Shakespeare's life was spent and who his friends really were. However, in recent years the antiquarians have gotten in their work on the subject of Rowe's memoir by unearthing facts which show *how* "the latter part of Shakspeare's (the Stratford actor's) life was spent" and who his associates were, and show the texture of character the stuff Shakspeare's life was made of, and have made us see that the life he chose to live a man of letters would not care to live. Rowe did not know that two of Shakspeare's friends were the brothers Combe, notorious disturbers of the public peace. And yet these were the very men with whom Shakspeare in retirement held conversation, during the latter part of his life, which resulted in a combination to take possession of the Stratford Common Fields by trespassers and land-grabbers, called the "Vendals of 1615," composed of William Combe, William Shakspeare and Arthur Mainwaring. This invasion of popular rights was resented. The struggle at Stratford waged and the townsmen were still in a riotous state of resistance at the time of Shakspeare's death.

When Rowe wrote "Some Account of the Life of Mr. William Shakspeare" in 1709, the Shakespeare deposition and attached signature "Willm Shaks," or Shak'p in the Public Record Office had not been the subject-matter of antiquarian research. No one prior to Professor Charles William Wallace' researches before 1904, "had ever examined them in the course of three centuries," which, according to Dr. Wallace bring to view. The family with whom Shakspeare lived, one Mountjoy-Wigmaker, consisted of the head of the house, Christopher Mountjoy; Madame Mountjoy and their daughter, Mary; also Stephen Bellott and William Eaton, who were boarding there as apprentices to learn the trade of wig-making; also Joan Johnson, servant, who speaks of him as "one Mr. Shakespeare that lay in the house" (he had lodgings there).

So then we are made acquainted with six more of Shakspeare's friends in the latter part of his life, with whom Shakspeare must have had almost daily conversation, for they were all living under the same roof with him when he dwelt there with a wig-maker in Silver Street, London, from 1598 to 1604, and had

known the wig-maker and family about thirteen years.

Nevertheless in regard to the matter of authorship, Dr. Wallace struggles to satisfy a non-literary situation which his own researches had disclosed by conjecturing that here in these illiterate, rude and base surroundings the supreme poet wrote ten of his deathless Plays, including "Hamlet," "Julius Caesar," "As You Like It," "Macbeth" and "Othello," etc. A mere supposition that has no basis in recorded fact. This is another of the many baits cast to lure the reader.

The partisans of the Stratfordian faith manifest an irrepressible desire to represent Shakspeare as a champion of popular rights, but the evidences show that Shakspeare in the latter part of his life was dead set against the popular side and during the last months of his life set at defiance the rights of the people.

Shakspeare's federation with Combe and Mainwaring in the land-grabbing scheme, the inclosure of Stratford Common-fields, was due to his avidity for wealth, to an intense money-hunger and not to aristocratic pretensions. This is shown by his long sojourn with the wig-maker, whose house and shop were under

one roof. However, Shakspere was not like Combe, arrogant in temper; nevertheless we are pretty certain of one thing that William Shakspeare's (of Stratford) personal history cannot be brought within the scope of literary affiliation.

Why press the pursuit further when all their researches have failed to unearth the grains of literary fact, when the caviling critics seeks to mingle authenticated non-literary facts with the chaff of fiction.

The two greatest names of all the forepast centuries, *called* Homer and Shakespeare, should be placed side by side inasmuch as the authorship of the immortal Plays and the authorship of the great Greek Epics, the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" are about equally in doubt, and the great unknown authors about equally pre-eminent. Shelley in speaking of them says, "As a poet Homer must be acknowledged to excel 'Shakespeare,' in the truth, the harmony, the sustained grandeur and the satisfying completeness of his images."

There is a school of critics who have a very convenient practice of writing biography to suit their whimsical impressions, and who read into Shakespeare manufactured tradition



merely "for filling", or whatever else is gratifying according to their desire; that is, it represents William Shakspeare of Stratford, not as he was but as they thought "Shakespeare" the immortal poet, should be, a practice inconsistent with rectitude. They are guilty of falsifying the subject of their biography.

However, with a divided personality there is nothing to restrain, but in the opinion of very many critics the Stratford player and the immortal poet are under the same hood—an undivided personality.

We are enjoined by critics of Stratfordian faith to read the story of Shakespeare's life in Shakespeare's Works. Although the Plays have been interpolated by others, the alloy is considerable running through all Shakespeare's Plays, so that the genuine fiber of the poet's life cannot be extracted. And supposing the Works contained the story of the poet's life it would be found incongruous to the material we know the Stratford player's life was made of.

Nevertheless, some critics amuse themselves in seeking vainly to deduce the story of the poet ("Shakespeare") life from his Works. They give us the suppositions they themselves

receive from specific sentences in the Plays until there are as many "Shakespeares" as there are commentators.

"The life of Shakspere is a fine mystery and I tremble every day lest something should turn up."—Charles Dickens.

Since the great novelist journeyed on into the other life in 1870, the diligent antiquaries have turned up something that should jar him were he now living, and make all things Stratfordian quaky. That matter I later refer to.

Nevertheless, the critics and commentators read into "Shakespeare" their guesses—fantastic tricks of the imagination.

In no other biography but "Shakespeare" so-called, do we find writers indulging so often in reveries and guess-work, which unfortunately have seduced the historian and misled the reader, by their statement of them as proven facts. I hold in my hand a copy of the more recent of these books of fictitious biography called "A Life of William Shakespeare." We are not surprised at anything in Shakespearian biography but we receive a sudden, violent shock from the historian of "A Short History of the English People" (p. 431) when he jolts the reader, saying,—“Rob-

ert Greene speaks bitterly of him (Shakespeare), under the name of "Shakescene." And that a fellow-playwright, Chettle, answered Greene's attack on him in words of honest affection." Rather queer that a grave, and in the main reliable historian, should have been fooled by the Stratfordians into stating their worthless conjectures as proven facts.

The critics and commentators having sneaked "Shakespeare's" name into the "Shakescene" passage, endeavor vainly to fool the reader. But as a matter of fact neither Greene nor Chettle ever named Shakespeare or any of his Plays. Nevertheless the Stratfordians are leading the reader to believe that Greene and Chettle in authenticated record make mention of "Shakespeare."

Not perceiving the difference between proof and opinion, Sir Sidney Lee audaciously assumes the point he endeavors vainly to prove. It signifies little or nothing how the Stratford actor spelled his name, although as a matter of fact he never adopted the literary form "Shakespeare", but always spelled his name after the rustic fashion "Shakspere" or "Shaksper." "The vulgar pronunciation," according to Mr. Malone and Mr. Garnett, says William

Shakespeare or (Shakspere) of Stratford, was a rustic. Mr. Garnett, by the way, is thoroughly orthodox. And now if a Stratford rustic is to be advanced as possessing this prodigious intellect and mastery of general erudition, which in five short years is to begin the authorship of Plays which belong to the supreme rank of literature, there should be some indication of his activity on or before 1592, for he should by this time be cramming his life with the stuff which the life of a maker of plays is made of. Therefore in order to identify the Stratford actor, William Shakspere with the pseudonymous author "Shakespeare," whose Plays were coming out anonymously, Green's Groatworth Shakes-scene letter is pressed into service in the hope that the Stratford actor (young Shakspere) may be divined as the author of the Poems and Plays. And furthermore no account of William Shakspere has ever been printed since Thomas Trywhitt's time (1730-85), of which the Groatworth Shake-scene allusion of Robert Greene is not a feature. That Shake-scene is meant for "Shakespeare", or if you like "Shakspere", is the contention of almost all who hold the

opinion that William Shakspere of Stratford was the author of the Plays and Poems.

That position I later contend against. The attribution was primarily the tentative conjecture of Thomas Twerhitt but has now become the banner-cry of the Stratfordians. The bulk of all recent biography called "A Life of William Shakespeare", consists chiefly of by-gone guess-work stated conjecturally by old time writers. But when stated as proven fact, as is usually the case by modern biographers, is clearly a willful perversion of history, and in several instances disclose the biographers' falsification of ancient documents so as to give them a meaning unlike to that which they bore. A sample of arrogant Stratfordian audacity is the substitution of "he" for "I", when read into the diary of Thomas Green, clerk of the Stratford Corporation.

That Shakespeare was the object and recipient of Robert Greene's censure (an averment that has no foundation in fact, a mere assumption without proof). And Chettle's supposed allusion to "Shakespeare" is also mere guess work. For George Peele "was excellent in the quality he professes" and surely did possess "facetious grace in writing." And there

were also several other persons having actorial repute who wrote for the stage.

It matters little at whom Greene aimed so long as "Shakespeare" was not the object of the aimer. However, the "only Shake-scene" allusion contained in Greene's letter written to three poets of his own fellowship, is an earnest, heartfelt dissuasive from the practice of making Plays, which many writers who hold the Stratfordian faith regard as "A pruning attack on Shakespeare," and forthwith attack Greene by foul aspersions, extremely bitter in tone, bespattering his memory with abuse.

This it seems to me is setting a high value on mere guess-work. But then we should keep in mind that the Stratfordians are in desperate straits. At the time Greene wrote his celebrated letter the Plays were anonymous, not one of the Shakespeare Plays of the period are of certified authorship. No poem was published under the name of "Shakespeare" or under any similar name till 1593; no Play till 1598; no edition of the Sonnets till 1609.

The votaries of "Shakespeare" posing as his biographers, in the urgency of their desire to remove doubts which had existed respecting Shakspeare's early London career, prior to the

year 1592, crave some notation of literary activity in the young man who went up from Stratford to London in 1587 (probably). As the immortal Plays were coming out anonymously and surreptitiously there is a very strong desire to appropriate "the only Shake-scene" (dance-scene) reference. For in the similarity and sound of the compound word "Shake-scene," consisting of two monosyllabic words joined so as to be one word,—in one of its elements there is that which fits it to receive a Shakespearean connotation, thus catching the popular fancy of the critics and academic commentator. The use of the compound word "Shake-rags" by William Kemp, the great comic actor and jig-dancer, which he used derisively and as tauntingly as Greene had used "Shake-scene." The first syllable in the compound word "Shake-scene" and "Shake-rags" is as a term of reproach about equally derisive.

Not all Stratfordians hold with Sir Sidney Lee that the allusion to "Shake-scene" in Greene's *Groatworth of wit* is meant for "Shakespeare". Professor Churton Collins says,—“it is at least doubtful whether this supposed allusion to Shakespeare has any refer-

ence to him at all". However, the coupling of the only "Shake-scene" allusion in Greene's "Groatsworth of Wit" with the "facetious grace in writing" intimation in Chittle Preface to the "Kind-Hart's Dreame" is still the idle fancy of some critics. Here again there are divergencies of opinion among themselves. All writers who hold the "Stratfordian faith" do not hold that the person reported to have "facetious grace in writing" can be identified with Shakespeare." The distinguished Stratfordian critics who maintain that the identification is impossible are Mr. Castle, K. C., Mr. E. K. Chambers, Mr. Fleay, Mr. Howard Staunton, and Professor George Saintsbury writes,—"Chettle's supposed apology is absolutely, and it would seem studiously anonymous."

The gentle Andrew Lang not relying on Chittle's remarks relating to Greene's letter written to "divers play-makers," proceeds summarily to throw Chittle's apology so-called, to "Shakespeare," out through the back door into the appendix.

However, the critics who are of the Stratfordian faith manifest a strong desire to cut out certain recorded facts which the Stratford



actor had put into his life of fifty-two years. And no wonder the brain of the plucky Mrs. Stopes reels when she struggles to identify "Mr. Shakespeare" with one John Shakespeare, bit-maker. She is balked at the doings of Belvoir Castle in 1613, which disclose the employment of a supposed great dramatist, an immortal poet ("Shakespeare"), when at the utmost height of his fame engaged with Dick Burbage, "about my Lord's impreso," a thing (device) of little value or consequence. *Will* and *Dick* each received the picayunish sum of forty-four shillings, an unlikely kind of activity to say the least, if *Will* was the author of the immortal Plays.





A GROUP OF LONDON AUTHORS OF THE XVI CENTURY

Sylvester, Selden, Beaumont (standing)  
Camden, Earl of Dorset, Fletcher, Sir Francis Bacon (seated)



## PART II

AN ACCOUNT OF THE TRUE  
PERSONALITY OF THE MAN  
WILLIAM SHAKSPERE OF  
STRATFORD-ON-AVON, AS  
SHOWN BY THE RECORDED  
FACTS OF HIS LIFE.



AN ACCOUNT OF THE TRUE PERSONALITY OF THE MAN WILLIAM SHAKSPERE OF STRATFORD-ON-AVON, AS SHOWN BY THE RECORDED FACTS OF HIS LIFE.

IV.

**T**ILL about the middle of the 19th century it was the current belief that it is as certain as any truth of physical science, that the most intellectual of the human race was born at or near Stratford-on-Avon. Till then no person is known to have said that the "Warwickshire provincial" could not have been the author of "Hamlet", "Lear" and "Othello". And notwithstanding all that has been written there is a feeling of unrest as to "Shakespeare" in the public mind. This restlessness is due in the main to antiquarian research resulting in an assemblage of things, such as the unearthing of non-literary facts in the Municipal Archives, which Mr. Hallowell Phillips has given in part in his "Outlines." The new, non-literary discoveries by Charles William Wallace, in the Public Record Office, also the

brand new discoveries in 1905, among the Belvoir papers about trivial fancy work (1613).

The absence of any reference to the Shakespeare Plays by Sir Thomas Bodley, in a letter to the librarian of the Bodleian Library. Note the fact the founder of the Library is writing about plays, play-books and baggage-books when Shakespeare was at the meridian splendor of his fame (1600). The fact that the plays of Shakespeare were unnoticed by this eminent man of letters (Sir Thomas Bodley), is due probably, to their anonymity, and to what Professor Masson designates as the astonishing characterization of Shakespeare expressed by the words "reticence", "non-concern" and "non-participation".

Whomsoever, the great dramatist was "whose definition or use of a word, all the Dictionaries, all the Scholars in the world regard as final", could not have been a provincial rustic. However, we are again reminded of Dr. Ingleby saying that "the bard of our admiration was unknown to the men of that age". It was this saying that woke up my thoughts when reading again the Table Talk of John Selden (1584-1654), antiquarian, scholar and



jurist, a contemporary of the world's very greatest poet—should not he have left records of him contained in his Table Talk, which was recorded and published by his amanuensis, Richard Milward, who lived with him for twenty years?

When the Stratford actor, William Shakspeare died in 1616, John Selden was 32 years of age. The Folio of 1623, the first collected edition of the "Shakspeare" Plays, gave Selden a fine opportunity of studying this prodigious intellect in his greatness, for when Selden died on the 30th of November, 1654, the Folio of 1623 had been in print thirty-one years. He had a very choice library of books, as well in M. S. as printed, but not a single one from Shakespeare, as the eight thousand volume gift to the Bodleian Library attest. He wrote in his books "Above all things Liberty". But this great man who was usually styled the great dictator of learning of the English nation, is silent about "Shakespeare" in his celebrated Table Talk. There are a great variety of subjects discussed, including "Authors," "Books", "Philosophy", and under the head of poetry we read,—“Ovid was not only a fine poet but as a man may speak, a great canon

lawyer, as appears in his 'Fasti', where we have more of the festivals of the old Romans than anywhere else; 'Tis pity the rest are lost'.

To the famous John Selden's legal mind it seems that Ovid was not only a fine poet but a great lawyer. It is to be regretted that the great scholar and jurist had never read in all probability the immortal Plays, and, of course could not deal with Shakespeare's legal attainments, if any such there were.

The Table Talk of John Selden contains, according to Coleridge, "more weighty bullion sense" than he had ever found in the same number of pages of any uninspired writer". Selden not only bearded tyranny but he kept, says Aubry, a plentiful table and was never without learned company, frequently that of Jonson, Drayton, Chapman and Camden.

Drayton's first edition of the "Poly-olbion" was enriched by the notes and illustrations of the poet's "learned friend", John Selden. Selden was introduced to King James I by Ben Jonson. Selden, with Camden, attended the banquet given by Ben after his and Chapman's release from prison.

William Shaksper or Shaksper, the first son and third child of John Shaksper, is sup-

posed to have been born at a place on the chief highway or road leading from London to Ireland, where the road crosses the river Avon. This crossing was called Street-ford or Stratford. This at any rate was the place of his baptism in 1564, as is evidenced by the Parish register, where the name is written *Jonnis Shagsper*.

The name was not made up of *Shake* and *Speare*, there is no *E* in the first syllable and no *A* in the last, according to the way the Stratford actor spelled his name, when he signs himself "Shakspere" there are no exceptions in his autographs. Arranged in chronological order, they are, (1) the abbreviated signature Shak'p to the deposition in the Bellott-Mountjoy suit, 11 May 1612. (2) Signature to the purchase deed of a house in the Blackfriars, 10 March 1613. (3) Signature to the mortgage deed of same March, 1613, and the three autograph signatures severally written on three sheets of the Will, March 25, 1616.

The next proven fact is that of his marriage in 1582, when he was little more than eighteen years old. Before this event nothing is known in regard to him.

John Shakspeare, the father, apparently, of William Shakspeare, is first discovered and described as a resident of Henley Street, Stratford, where our first glimpse is had of him in April, 1552. In that year he was fined the sum of twelve pence for violation of sanitary regulations. The number of petty suits for debt in which he was implicated, show a litigious disposition. Nothing is known in regard to the place of his birth and nurture, nor in regard to his ancestry. John Shakspeare seems to have been a chapman, trading in farm produce.

In 1557 he married Mary Arden, the seventh and youngest daughter of Robert Arden, who had left to her fifty-three acres and a house called Asbies at Wilmcote. She also acquired an interest in two messuages at Smitterfield. This step gave John Shakspeare a reputation among his neighbors of having married an heiress, and he was not slow to take advantage of it. His official career commenced at once by his election, in 1557, as an ale taster, "to see to the quality of bread and ale". He was amerced as a punishment the same year for not keeping his gutters clean.

In 1568 he was elected High Bailiff of Stratford. John Shakspeare was the only mem-

ber of the Shakspeare family that was honored with civic preferment and confidence, serving the corporation for the ninth time in several functions. However, the time of his declination was at hand, for in the autumn of 1577, the wife's property at Asbies was mortgaged for forty pounds. The money subsequently tendered in repayment of the loan was refused until other sums due to the same creditor were repaid.

John Shakspeare was deprived of his aldermanship, September 6th, 1586, because he did not come to the hall when notified. On March 29th, 1577, he produced a writ of habeas corpus which shows he had been in prison for debt. Notwithstanding his inability to write, he had more or less capacity for official business, but so managed his private affairs as to wreck his own and his wife's fortune. At the time of the habeas corpus matter, William Shakspeare was thirteen years old. "In all probability", says his biographer, "the lad was removed from school, his father requiring his assistance". There was a grammar school in Stratford which was reconstructed on a pre-Reformation foundation by Edward VI. No Stratford record nor Stratford tradition says

that Shakspeare attended the Stratford grammar school. But had the waning fortune of his father made it possible, he might have been a student there from his seventh year—the probable age of admission—until his improvident marriage when little more than eighteen years old. However, a provincial grammar school is a convenient place for the lad about whose activities we know nothing, and whose education is made to impinge on conjecture and fanciful might-have-been.

We are told that William Shakspeare must have been sent to the grammar school at Stratford, as his parents and all the relatives were unlearned persons, and there was no other public education available; nevertheless it was the practice of that age to teach the boy no more than his father knew.

One thing is certain, that the scholastic awakening in the Shakspeare family was of short duration, for it began and ended with William Shokspere, whose youngest daughter Judith, was as illiterate as were her grandparents. She could not even write her name, although her father, the now putative author, at the time of her school age, had become wealthy. When Judith Shakspeare was invited

in December, 1611, to be a subscribing witness to two instruments, in both instances her attestation was executed with marks. Judith had then attained the age of twenty-six years, and his eldest daughter, "the little premature Susanna" as De Quincy calls her, could barely scrawl her name, being unable to identify her husband's (Dr. John Hall's) handwriting, which no one but an illiterate could mistake. Her contention with the army surgeon, Dr. James Cook, respecting her husband's manuscripts, is proof that William Shakspeare was true to his antecedents by conferring illiteracy upon his daughters.

William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon was not exceptionally liberal and broad-minded in the matter of education in contrast with many of his contemporaries, notably Richard Mulcaster (1531-1611) who says that "the girl should be as well educated as her brother".

While the real author of the immortal plays had written,—“There is no darkness but ignorance”. “This house is as dark as ignorance, though ignorance were as dark as hell” (Twelfth Night) “seeing ignorance is the curse of God” (2 Henry VI) “O, thou monster

ignorance, how deformed dost thou look". (Love's Labor Lost).

William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon we know, was born to ignorant parents, nurtured in a bookless home which his unlettered father gave him from necessity, and not from choice. But why should the home of this wealthy son be as illiterate and as bookless as that which he had provided for his own children? "Dull unfeeling barren ignorance" (Richard II).

Wealth had brought no change in the environment of the Shaksperes of Stratford in the matter of education. However, it was not the least of John Shakspeare's misfortunes that in November, 1582, his oldest son, William, added to his embarrassment by premature and forced marriage. It is the practice of Shakspeare's biographers to pass hurriedly over this event in the young man's life, for there is nothing commendable in his marital relations. There is expressed in it, irregularity of conduct and probable desertion on his part. Pressure was brought to bear on the young man by his wife's relations, and he was forced to marry the woman whom he had wronged. Who can believe that this marriage was a



happy one, when the only written words contained in his will are not words expressive of connubial endearment such as "Dear wife" or "Sweet wife" but "My wife". He had forgotten her, but, by an interlineation, in the final draft of his Will, she received his second best bed with its furniture. This was the sole bequest made to her.

Mr. Charles Elton, Q. C., informs us through Sir Sidney Lee (p. 274) that "Shakspere barred the dower". We agree with Sir Sidney Lee "that the bar was for practical purposes, perpetual, and disposes of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipp's assertion that Shakespeare (Shakspere's) wife was entitled to dower from all his real estate".

We are by no means sure of the identity of his wife in the absence of any entry of the marriage. We do not know that she and Shakspere ever went through the actual ceremony, unless her identity is traceable through Anne Whately, as a regular license was issued for the marriage of William Shakspere and Anne Whately of Temple Grafton, November 27th, 1582, the day preceding that of William Shagspere and Anna Hathaway, according to the marriage bond of November 28th, 1582.

Richard Hathaway of Shottery, the reputed father of Shakspeare's wife, Anne, in his will dated September 1st, 1581, bequeathed his property to seven children, his daughters being Catherine, Margaret and Agnes. No Anna was mentioned. The first published notice of the name of William Shakspeare's (supposed) wife appears in Rowe's *Life of Shakspeare* (1709) wherein it is stated that she "was the daughter of one Hathaway, said to have been a substantial yeoman in the neighborhood of Stratford."

This was all that Thomas Betterton, the actor, "Rowe's informant, could learn at the time of his visit to Stratford-on-Avon. The exact time of this visit is unknown, but it was probably about the year 1690. This lack of knowledge in regard to the Hathaways shows that the locality of Anne Hathaway's residence or that of her parents was not known at Stratford. The house at Smottery, now known as Anne Hathaway's cottage, may have been the home of Anne Hathaway (supposed) wife of William Shakspeare, before her marriage, but of this there is no proof. Shakspeare was married under the name "Willm Shagsper" but the place of marriage is unknown as his place

of residence is not mentioned in the bond. Although Shottery is in the parish of Stratford, no record of Shakspeare's marriage to Anne or Agnes, the supposed daughter of Richard Hathaway has been found in the parish register. However, "in the registry of the bishop of the diocese (Worcester) in the Edgar Tower is contained a deed wherein Sandells and Richardson, husbandmen of Shottery, make themselves responsible in the sum of forty pounds on November 28th, 1582, to free the bishop of all liability should any lawful impediment by reason of any pre-contract or consanguinity be disclosed subsequently. "Provided that Anne obtained the consent of her friends the marriage might proceed with once asking of the bannes of matrimony between them".

The wording of the bond shows that "despite the fact that the bridegroom was a minor by nearly three years", the consent of his parents was neither called for nor obtained "though necessary for strictly legalized procedure". The bondsmen, Sandells and Richardson, representing the lady's family, ignored the bridegroom's family completely. In having received the deed they forced Shakspeare

to marry their friend's daughter in order to save her reputation, "having apparently done his best to desert her before his marriage." Soon afterwards—within six months,—a daughter was born. Moreover, the whole circumstances of the case render it highly probable that Shakspeare had no present thought of marriage, for the waning fortune of his father made him acquainted with the "cares of bread". He was a penniless youth, not yet of age, having neither craftsmanship nor means of livelihood, and was forced by her friends into marrying her, a woman eight years older than himself. But bye and bye, he will have his revenge upon his wife's relations by not remembering any of them in his last will and testament. Even the mother of his children is forgotten "for Shakspeare barred the dower".

In 1585 she presented him with twins, when he left Stratford for London. We do not know positively, but the advent of the twins is the approximate date of the young man's flight. He lived apart from his wife many years, apparently from the time he left Stratford (date not positively known) until probably 1596, the death year of his son, Hamnet. The breath

of slander never touched the good name of Anne (or Agnes) the neglected wife of William Shakspeare. "There is *prima facie* evidence that the player wife fared in his absence no better than his father and mother", who, dying intestate in 1601 and 1608 respectively, were buried somewhere by the Stratford church, but there is no trace of any sepulchral monument or memorial. If anything of the kind had been set up by their wealthy son, William Shakspeare, it would certainly have been found by some one. "The only contemporary mention, writes Sir Sidney Lee, made of the wife of Shakspeare between her marriage in 1582 and her husband's death in 1616, was as the borrower, at an unascertained date of forty shillings from Thomas Whittington, who had formerly been her father's shepherd. The money was unpaid when Whittington died in 1601, and his executor was directed to recover the sum from Shakspeare and distribute it among the poor of Stratford". As though in mockery of what might have been looked for in the wealthy husband.

'There is disclosed in this pecuniary transaction, coupled with the slight mention of her in the will, and the barring of the dower,



youth in the feare of God that did converse with her most rare and singular, a great maintainer of hospitality, greatly esteemed of her betters, misliked of none unless the envious. When all is spoken that can be said a woman so furnished and garnished with Virtue as not to be bettered and hardly to be equalled of any, as she lived most virtuously, so she dyed most godly. Set down by him that best did know what hath been written to be true”.

#### THOMAS LUCY.

In order to shield Shakspeare from the charge of having deserted his family, his biographers find it convenient to set the young man to deer stealing so that he may make his flight to London in order to escape from the grasp of his reputed prosecutor, Sir Thomas Lucy, leaving wife and children a burden upon his poverty-stricken father.

The probable source of the fiction is the supposed reference contained in “The Merry Wives of Windsor”. The malicious libel was worked after the opening scene, a fictitious narrative of an event that never happened, and first made current about one hundred

years after the death of William Shakspeare of Stratford.

The fabricator of the story could not have been a native of Warwickshire for he would have known the arms borne by the Charlicote Lucys were three luces, and could not have been mistaken for the dozen white luces on Justice Shallows' ancient coat. It shows how Sir Thomas Lucy, a very sagacious and good man, may be calumniated by perverse mythomania. Still the Lucys of a later day were not anxious to lose the reputation of having spanked Shakspeare for poaching on the ancestral preserves.

There is very little likelihood that the young husband, with a wife and three babies to support, would voluntarily place himself in a position where he would have to flee from Sir Thomas Lucy's prosecution, thereby bringing disgrace upon himself, his wife and children, while his parents in straightened circumstances were struggling to keep the wolf from the door. Moreover, deer were not subject to the crime of larceny at the common law. There were statutes which made it an offense to kill deer in a park impaled. The records show that Sir Thomas Lucy had no park im-



paled. The poaching yarn, having no historical basis, was not traditionally preserved by the descendants of Sir Thomas Lucy. Unfortunately, all the traditions about Shakespeare or however you spell the name, are non-literary and of a degrading character.

It was in company with Richard Burbage and William Kempe that William Shakspeare is first introduced to our notice as an actor. The treasurer's account shows that "Will Kemp, Will Shakspeare, and Rich Burbage" received payment for two comedies played at Court on 26th and 28th December, 1594. They were all share-holding actors. But we do not know that all or either of them appeared before the Queen in person—at any rate, a matter of no importance, because first, second and third-rate actors often played before the Queen.

The last reference made by the Burbages to Shakspeare is contained in a memorial address to the Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's household by Cuthbert Burbage, who gave an account of the building of the Globe Theatre.

In this letter reference is made to William Shakspeare. "To ourselves", he says, "we joined those deserving men, Shakspeare, Hem-

ings, Condall, Philips and others. partners in the profits of that they call the House" and he adds, "that when he and his brother Richard took possession of the Blackfriars Theatre in 1609, they placed in it men players which were Heming, Candall, Shakspeare, etc., as successors to the children of the Chapel".

This is the way the now reputed author of the immortal plays is described by the Burbages, the principal owners of the theatre, to whom the manuscripts must have been submitted. They surely must have known all about player Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon for they were in daily intercourse with him, "a man-player, a deserving man". This is all that has come down to us concerning Shakspeare's long association with the Burbages after twenty-five years of intimacy.

This reference was made in 1635, nineteen years after player Shakspeare's death (1616) and twelve years after the publication of the first folio edition of 1623. This then is Burbage's appraisal of this yoke-fellow, Will Shakspeare. The fact is the Burbages hadn't any literary history of their "man-player and deserving man" to record, and were not personally responsible for the literary delusion as-

sociated with his name, although without an intention of mischief. But the tangibility of William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon is very much in evidence along pecuniary lines, especially as money lender, land owner, speculator, and litigant. In 1597 he bought New Place in Stratford for sixty pounds. Also mentioned in a letter of Abraham Sturley a purposing to buy the Stratford tithes. The following entry is in Chamberlain's account at Stratford, 1598: "Paid to Mr. Shaxpere for one lode of stone Xd".

In the same year, Richard Quiney writes to William Shakspeare, a letter for a loan of thirty or forty pounds. This letter is the only one addressed to Shakspeare which is known to exist. In 1599 Shakspeare acquires shares in Globe Theatre. "In May, 1602, Shakspeare bought one hundred and seven acres of arable land at Stratford for three hundred two pounds (in his absence the conveyance was given to his brother Gilbert) in the same year he bought a house with barns, orchards and gardens from Hercules Underhill for sixty pounds, also a cottage close to his house at New Place.

In 1605 he bought the thirty-two-year lease

of half Stratford tithes for four hundred and forty pounds.

The same year, Augustine Phillips, a brother "player" leaves Shakspeare a thirty shilling piece of gold in his will. "In 1613 Shakspeare bought a house near Backfriars Theatre, London, for one hundred and forty pounds, and mortgaged it the next day for sixty pounds. In 1612, Shakspeare is mentioned in a law suit, brought before Lord Elismere about Stratford tithes."

There is no evidence to show that Shakspeare ever visited Stratford from the time he left it (date not positively known, probably in 1586) to the time he returned to it, the exact date unknown. We are constrained to believe, however, that the father was in Stratford at the burial of his only son, Hamnet, claimed early by the covetous grave in his twelfth year, August 11th, 1596, in whom for eleven years lay the hopes of primogenitive succession. The father set up no stone to tell where the boy lay.

Stratford-on-Avon then contained about fourteen hundred inhabitants. "The most dirty, unseemly, ill-paved, wretched-looking town in all Britain", is David Garrick's un-

sanitary description of Stratford at the time of the Jubilee, 1769. In Shakspeare's day, cottages in Stratford consisted of rough walls and thatched roofs. Mr. Halliwell-Phillips says "at this period and for many generations afterwards, the sanitary conditions of Stratford-on-Avon were simply terrible. The streets were narrow, irregular and without crossways, full of refuse and lively with pigs, poultry and ravenous birds".

"From dirty illiterate Stratford", says Mr. Lang, "we can expect nothing more and nothing better than we receive."

But in Mr. Lang's statement, I find much to support my own opinion of the illiterate condition of Stratford in Shakspeare's day. But I cannot share in his opinion in regard to the transmission of inherited traditions. For with notables it is by no means the case. The fact is, William Shakspeare of Stratford did not attain to much histrionic eminence, and was always a stranger to the avocations of political life. All those who were coetaneous did not regard him as a person of any consequence apart from his wealth. There is not the faintest shadow of credited evidence to warrant the assumption that Shakspeare at the time of his

retirement to Stratford-on-Avon was received by his fellow townsmen as a poet or man of genius. But instead in the very year of his return (inferentially) to his native place in 1611-1612, the Town Council had carried a resolution that no play should be presented in the Guild Hall. But what became of the family traditions? These surely would have been preserved by immemorial custom were he a person of note or distinction. Family tradition is fossil history. The amber in which the noblest achievements, the tenderest sentiments have been securely embedded and preserved.

However, as a matter of fact, there were no inherited traditions of a literary kind to preserve; not a single particle of authenticated evidence to connect the family of the Stratford Shakspeare with the author of the immortal plays and poems.

But Mr. Lang is asking us to keep in memory the fact that society in Stratford was not only not literary, but was terribly illiterate.

Halliwell-Phillips says, "There were certainly not more than two or three dozen books, if so many in the whole town".

Reader, does it not jar you a little when

made to understand that New Place, the largest house in the town, the home of the wealthy William Shakspeare, who in the prime of life was living with his illiterate wife and daughter in a bookless home—and they with the now reputed author of *Hamlet*, *Lear* and *Othello*.

It seemed to Prince Bismarck incredible that a person “so intimate with all the social courtesies and refinements of thought who had written what was attributed to Shakespeare could of his own free will, whilst still in the prime of life, have retired to such a place as Stratford-on-Avon, and lived there for years, cut off from intellectual society and out of touch with the world”. And, we may add, without leaving in Stratford history or society a single trace of his existence as a poet or writer.

From the absence of all reference to books in the will of 1616, it may be safely inferred that the Stratford Shakspeare was not the owner of books or manuscripts. But Warwickshire was not altogether bookless, for we read that Sir Thomas Lucy in a will drawn up in the year 1600, speaks of “all my French and Italian books”. In the will of John Florio,

we find bequeathed his English books and all his other goods to his beloved wife, Rose Florio.

We also find that poets who are not intimately acquainted with the "cares of bread" were book owners, although not so wealthy as William Shakspeare of Stratford; for 1627 is the date of William Drummond of Hawthornden 1585—1649 munificent gift of about five hundred volumes to the library of Edinburgh University,—although particularly rich in the English poets, only one from Shakspeare's works, "Love's Labor Lost."

Robert Burton, a contemporary, was the owner of a large library which he bequeathed to the Bodleian Library.

Ben Jonson was also a great book lover, and the possessor of one of the largest private libraries in England, although often depleted by his necessities, having sold them for bread. But there are still many copies of his books extant, which he presented to his friends. But neither Burton nor Jonson seem to have been the owners of a single volume of Shakspeare.

This much we know, that in Tudor and Jacobin times, John (father), Mary (mother), Joan (sister), Judith (daughter) of William



Shakspere of illiterate Stratford-on-Avon, were all illiterate, and not a single fragment of his own letters, books or manuscripts have yet been discovered. Still, the upholders of the Stratford delusion claim for "him who sleeps by Avon" identification with the author of the immortal plays, although there is not a vestige of the literary remains of poet or author, nor has anything ever been discovered amongst the family effects of any of those who bore marital relations.

For instance, Shakspere's son-in-law, Dr. John Hall and Thomas Quiney, and there was also Thomas Nash and Sir John Barnard, first and second husband of his grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. All these were persons of education and property, and may be trusted to transmit Shakspere's letters, manuscripts, books and family literary traditions. But they have not done so, presumably because there was nothing of a literary character to preserve and transmit. How inexplicable if he was the author of the plays and poems.

All through the seventeenth century, Joan Hart, the actor's sister and her descendants inhabited the birthplace, so-called from the time of his death (1616) to the year 1646, and his

younger daughter lived at Stratford-on-Avon until her death in 1661.

Then there were Hathaways, who were members (inferentially) of his wife's family, residing in Chapel Street from 1647 to 1696; also his godson, William Walker, who died in the same town in 1680. The whole period covered by Shakspeare's life and that of his descendants was 105 years from 1564 to 1669, or to the death of his grand-daughter Elizabeth Hall. In kinship, she was cognate to her mother's father, William Shakspeare, whose reputed authorship of poems and plays was not traditionally handed down by those to whom he gave lineal descent, or by any person or persons coetaneous with him for that matter in the village where he had lived the half of his life time.

It may be feared, says Mr. Lang, that Shakspeare's daughter, Judith (twin with Hamnet) "brought up in that very illiterate town of Stratford under an illiterate mother, was neglected in her education." Why, may we ask, did this very wealthy husband and father compel his wife and daughter to reside in that very illiterate town of Stratford, instead of bringing them to London and ab-

senting himself for so many years, thereby shirking all responsibility in the matter of the education of his children, leaving the discharge of every parental and social duty to the lonely wife and illiterate mother of his offspring.

Mr. Halliwell-Phillips, the most candid and therefore the most reliable orthodox Stratford relator has shown that "By the spring of 1602 at the latest, he had acquired a secure and definite competence, and yet eight years afterwards in 1610 he (Shakspeare) is discovered playing in company with Burbage and Hemmings at the Blackfriars Theatre, although very much ashamed of the actor's vocation, according to the upholders of the Stratford-Shakspeare delusion. Then why not hike back to Stratford-on-Avon? Why longer remain a "vagabond under the Act" which bespoke for him an intense money-hunger, to say the least.

"Shakspeare's occupation", says Mr. Phillips, "debarred him from the possibility of his sustaining even an approach to a continuous domestic life"—moonshine—wherein did Shakspeare's occupation differ from those of Alleyn, Hemming, Condall, Burbage and

other players like himself, share-holding actors, who under precisely the same or very similar conditions sustained family or domestic relations in London.

The former, Edward Alleyn, famous as an actor, and the founder of Dulwich College, who lived with his wife in London and called her "sweet mouse". The latter, Burbage, in the same place with the wife whom he made his sole executrix. Shakspeare's abandonment of his wife and children was from choice, not from necessity.

And implies the assumption that he was not an affectionate husband, a kind and loving father; who could not have mourned for his child whom he had not seen since his infancy,—the son who could have no remembrance of his father.

Are we to believe that the author of the "Winter's Tale" and "Midsummer Nights Dream" actually divorced his own daughters from the socialities and refinements of London life, from the pursuit of knowledge under his immediate direction, from access to that great store house of learning, the immortal plays which contain the treasures of the rarest intelligence, the children of his own brain—

who wrote of Woman—"tender as infancy and grace". "Eyes that do mislead the morn".

Hermione, Isabella, Juliet, Cordelia, Desdemona, Perdita, Miranda, Helena, Imogen and Constance weeping for her lost son, Arthur, while grief "stuffs out his vacant garments with his form". Glorious sisterhood—the fairest, the sweetest bevy of women this world of sadness, gladness, joy and tears has ever known in them; the true, the beautiful and the good are born.

## V.

Shakspeare is thought to have been penurious for his litigious striving point in that direction, but this feature of his character was not disclosed in 1596 and 1599 when he sought to have his family enrolled among the gentry as shown by his extravagance in bribing the officers of the Herald College to issue a grant of arms to his father, "a transaction which involved", says Dr. Farmer, "the falsehood and venality of the father, the son and two Kings-at-arms, and did not escape protest, for if ever a coat was cut from whole cloth, we may be sure that this coat-of-arms was the one".

William Shakspeare himself was not in a position to apply for a coat-of-arms, "a vagabond under the Act" stood far too low in the social scale for the notice of heraldry. Sir William Dethick Garter—King-at-arms is charged with unlawfully conceding arms to Shakspeare and twenty-three other "base and ignoble persons". We know that the Stratford Shakspeares did not belong to the *armigerous* part of the population, and that they stood somewhat lower in the social scale than the Halls, Nashs, Bernards or Quineys who bore marital relations with them.

Sir Sidney Lee in commentation on two recently discovered manuscript books, written *Circa*, 1599, he states, "The censors general allegation is that men of low birth and undignified employment were corruptly suffered by the heralds to credit themselves with noble or highly aristocratic descent, and to bear in considerations of large money payments coat armour of respectable antiquity."

(LEE, *A Life of Shakespeare*).

A long list of the surnames of these pretenders are given. The fourth name in the list is that of Shakspeare.

On June 5th, 1607, Dr. John Hall was mar-

ried at Stratford-on-Avon to William Shakspeare's eldest daughter, Susanna. He was an eminent physician of the French Court school and was opposed to the indiscriminate process of bleeding. He was summoned more than once to attend the Earl and the Countess of Northampton at Ludlow Castle.

Dr. John Hall died on November 25th, 1635. With the death of his only daughter, Elizabeth, in the year 1669-70, terminated the lincal succession.

On February 10th, 1616, Shakspeare's younger daughter, Judith, married Thomas Quiney, a liquor dealer of Stratford, four years her junior. They were married without a license, or proclaiming of the banns, an irregularity for which they were fined and threatened with excommunication by the ecclesiastical court at Worcester. Quiney was fined in the year 1631 for "swearing and for encouraging tipplers in his shop" (groggery).

In the year 1652, he removed to London, having deserted his wife after the death of all their children. Judith survived her sister, sons and husband, although forsaken and alone, continued to live to the ripe age of seventy-seven.

From the Quiney family is a letter, the only letter addressed to Shakspeare, which is known to exist, and is one which asks for a loan of thirty pounds. Even his learned kinsman, the Quineys, like the illiterate Shaksperes, saw him only hoarding money instead of writing plays.

No wonder such eminent votarist of Shakespeare as Hallam Dyce and Emersor are disappointed and perplexed, for while the record concerning the life of the player, money lender, land owner speculator and litigant are ample, they disclose nothing of a literary character, but the pecuniary litigation evidence, growing out of Shakspeare's devotion to money getting in London and Stratford does unfold his true life and character, the records do not furnish a single instance of friendship, kindness or generosity, but upon the delinquent borrower of money, he rigidly evoked the law, which gave a generous advantage to the creditor and its vile prison to the debtor.

Shakspeare with Shylock insistence in 1600 brough action against John Clayton for seven pounds and got judgment in his favor. In



August, 1608, Shakspeare prosecuted John Adenbroke to recover a debt of six pounds.

Dr. Charles William Wallace is querying the fact, "Did Shakespeare sell malt?" It was in 1604 that William Sexpere sued Philip Rogers to recover a balance of 35s. 10d. due for malt. But there seems to have been at least six other William Shaksperes living in Stratford and vicinity. Dr. Wallace is anxious to relieve William Shakspeare, the Stratford actor, in whose opinion was the dramatist, of the stigma on his name from his supposed connection with the brewing business, a degrading kind of activity. And it is creditable to Dr. Wallace that he strives to disassociate the name and fame of the Author of the Plays, from the liquor traffic. Although the most deeply rooted of all the vices of mankind from primeval ages, still among the most advanced communities, it is now in the course of extinction.

In the opinion of Dr. Wallace, the document in the Stratford Court of Record does not apply to Shakspeare, but to some unknown petty brewer or malster of Stratford, who was prosecuting Rogers for these pica-yunish debts for malt; because Shakspeare

could not have been in both places, London and Stratford, at once. While Dr. Wallace sees exigency in Shakspeare's affairs in the Rogers case, requiring his immediate personal attention, Halliwell-Phillips of the same school, sees nothing which required the presence of the litigious money lender or malster in Stratford.

He says, "It must not be assumed that the great dramatist attended personally to these matters, although, of course, the proceedings were carried on under his instructions." Where we would write Shakspeare (player), he uses "Shakespeare" and means the undivided personality of Author and Player.

However, we are not asked to believe Shakspeare slipping out of London into Stratford, selling malt, then travel back to London to join the King's players, then shortly afterwards journey back again to Stratford in order to prosecute Rogers for these petty debts for malt. For the Addenbroke suit is actually a presumption against such contention for "The precepts as appears from memoranda in the originals were issued by the poet's (player) cousin, Thomas Green, who was then

residing under some unknown conditions at New Place."

While Shakespeare, the Author of the Plays was according to supposed date, writing "Coriolanus," we know and can prove that William Shakspeare, the Stratford player was a professional money-lender at Stratford and London; the same William Shakspeare who sued one John Clayton in March, 1600, at London to recover a debt of 7*L*. But was he the same Shakspeare who sued Philip Rogers to recover a balance due for malt?

And as to the stigma on his name referred to, is there anything to show in Shakspeare's Stratford life or during his whole sojourn with the wigmaker Mountjoy in Silver Street, London, that he would have regarded the business of a small brewer or malster as a stigma on his name? For we find his name associated with at least two whiskey soaked traditions (so-called) and that one of the thirty grog-shops in Stratford was run by Shakspeare's own son-in-law, Thomas Quiney, "who was fined for swearing, and for keeping a disorderly house."

Mr. J. M. Robertson, a stalwart Stratfordian, chides Mr. Andrew Lang of his own fel-

lowship, because he pronounced one William Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon, a "hard creditor" and to his thinking, "Shakspere's four law suits to recover small debts are very inadequate proof of such a charge." The present writer is of the opinion that one such law suit of the like kind that William Shakepere "ran with" his neighbor, John Addenbroke adequate proof of such a charge, for is it conceivable that a rascally debtor even would suffer imprisonment in one of those jacobin cess pools called a jail, in order to shun the payment of a paltry sum. But, by the way, there is no proof that Shakspere even found one of his debtors dishonest. Now the presumption is that the poor man was poverty stricken, unable to make both ends meet, for his hard and relentless creditor Shakspere, kept up the pursuit for one year until he left the town. A professional money lender or usurer, he never misses an opportunity to pursue an impoverished debtor into prison, divesting him of the ability to maintain himself and his family. "The pursuit of an improverished man for the sake of imprisoning him and depriving him, both of the power of paying his debts and supporting his family, grate

upon our feelings," says Richard Grant White, and adds this eminent orthodox Shakspearian scholar, "We hunger and we receive these husks; we open our mouths for food and we break our teeth against these stones."

We may be sure that there was left in the impoverished home of the debtor, little more palatable than husks and stones when the father fled to escape from the clutches of his insistent creditor (Shakspere) while his children are clamorous for bread, the wolf of hunger from every crevice glaring.

Contrast these scenes in the life of William Shakspere with the restoration of the widow's son by Abraham Lincoln. Poorly clad and weeping, she said to him, "Mr. President, I had three sons and a husband in the army. My husband has just been killed and I come to ask back my oldest boy." He granted the request. She took the order, went to the field, only to see that oldest son die from his wounds. She went again to the President with the statement of the facts by the surgeon. Mr. Lincoln read the backing on the order, and said, "I know what you want, you need not ask for it. I will give you your next son," saying as he wrote, "you have one and I have one, that is

about right." The poor woman standing by him smoothed his hair with her hands, saying, while her tears fell upon his head, "God bless you, Mr. President, may you live a thousand years and be the head of this great nation." Ever the same in the White House, as he had been in the log cabin, Abraham Lincoln's calloused palms never slipped from the poor man's hand.

In contrast also, some letters to Edward Alleyn, which have been preserved, prove that Thomas Dekker, playwright, was several times befriended by that open-handed actor, the "famous Ned Allen." He appears to have had no relations with Shakspeare, the Stratford player.

The paltry suits brought to recover debts do not tend to disclose this Shakspeare's "radiant Temperament" or fit him to receive the adjective "gentle" except in contumely for his claim to coat-armour. It is not known that Shakspeare ever gave hospitality to the necessities of the poor of his native shire, for whom it appears there beat no pulse of tenderness. A man of scanty sensibilities he must have been. The poor working people of Stratford, we may be sure, shed no tear at this Shaks-

pere's departure from the world. We do not envy the man who can regard these harsh pecuniary practices in Shakspeare as commendable traits of his worldly wisdom, for he was shrewd in money matters, and could have invested his money in London and Stratford, so as not to have brought sorrow and distress upon his poor neighbors.

These matters are small in appearance, but they suggest a good deal for they bear witness to sorrow stricken mothers, hungry children and fathers in loathsome prisons, powerless to provide food, warmth and light for the home. Shakspeare's loans became a matter of court record only when his debtors failed to pay. The diary or note book of Philip Henslowe, the theatrical manager and play broker, shows that Henslowe was himself a very penurious and grasping man, who taking advantage of starving play makers' necessities, became very wealthy.

William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon as a sharer "in the profits of that they call the House" became rich also, but his note book has not been preserved, so nothing is known of his business methods in dealing with the poor play makers, but the antiquarians by ran-

sacking corporations records and other public archives have proven that player Shakspeare was very much such a man as the old pawn-broker and play broker, Philip Henslowe, of a rival house.

The biographers should record these facts, and not strive to shun them for the literary antiquaries have unearthed and brought them forward, and they tell the true story of Shakspeare's life, though we do not linger lovingly over them, for like Hallam, "We as little feel the power of identifying the young man who came up from Stratford, was afterward an indifferent player in a London theatre, and retired to his native place in middle life with the author of *Macbeth* and *Lear*." For the Stratford records are as barren of literary matter as the lodgings in Silver Street, London. Not a crumb for the literary biographer in either place.

One of the results of Dr. Charles W. Wallace's research in the Public Record Office is the new Shakspeare signature attached to his deposition in an abbreviated form, and shows how the Stratford player spelled the first syllable of his surname,—“Willm Shaks” or “Shak’p” is not Shake—Shakspeare-Shaksper-



Shaks, this is the spelling of his name and there are no exceptions in his autograph. Nevertheless the Stratfordians usually reject the spelling of the owner of the name and adopt the spelling printed on the title page of the plays and poems,—“Shakespeare” (a pseudonym), to indicate that the Stratford player, in the opinion of the Stratfordians was the author of the plays.

Furthermore, Dr. C. W. Wallace had the good fortune in his research to discover the whereabouts of this certain individual, who in 1612, signs himself “Willm Shaks” or Shak’p and has succeeded in locating his lodgings in 1604 at the house of one Mountjoy, a wigmaker, at the corner of Muggell and Silver Streets, London, as “one Mr. Shakespeare that lay in the house,” and who lodged there from 1598 to 1604. How much longer he continued to sojourn in Silver Street, “the region of money and a good seat for an usurer,” as Ben Jonson describes it, is uncertain; but he seems to have known the wigmaker’s family about thirteen years, exceeding in number the years he had lived with his own family. (See Dr. Charles William Wallace’s article,—“New Shakespeare Discoveries,”

Harper's Monthly Magazine for March, 1910).

However, Dr. Wallace has brought forth from obscurity one "Mr. Shakespeare," who in 1604, succeeded in securing a husband for the daughter of a match-making mamma, but absolutely nothing whatever relating to literary work.

From the fact that he (Shakspere) is discovered at the corner of Muggell and Silver Streets, bringing about a marriage in 1604, the supposed date of "Othello," it cannot be assumed that he wrote the play here or elsewhere, as there is not a crumb of evidence in proof.

Dr. C. W. Wallace has failed to discover Shakspere, the Stratford player as an author. The witnesses in their deposition speak of him as "one Mr. Shakespeare," never as poet or author. The witnesses were persons of various employments and varied accomplishments, from the scholarly Daniel Nicholas, son of a former Lord Mayor, to the illiterate Joan Johnson, who like the Stratford player's wife and daughter, could not write her name. All of them, near neighbors, saw nothing in one, "Mr. Shakespeare," who had lodgings in the

wig-maker's house and shop in 1604-1612, which distinguished him from the throng. *Prima-facie* evidence that he never had any literary celebrity and one of many proofs also of his fictitious reputation. For when the twelve depositions were taken in the case of Bellott vs. Mountjoy, and signed by his neighbors of the parish of St. Olave in 1612, all of the "Shakespeare" plays were then written, according to supposed dates.

The Stratford player had then protracted his sojourn in London to twenty-six years, during which time there came into his life, as the result of a quarrel, an incident of the commonest kind—trifles which reveal the true character of the Stratford player and proclaim him as one affiliated to insignificant men and matters.

These non-literary facts were unearthed by Professor Charles William Wallace in the matter of Shakspeare's deposition in the case of Bellott vs. Mountjoy, and which he discovered in the Public Record Office, but that in no way contributed to a literary biography.

The truth is that with all their industry, the antiquarians have in this regard, not brought to light a single proven fact to sustain the

claim that this William Shakspeare, the Stratford actor was the author of either poems or plays.

This wee bit of new knowledge gives us a glimpse of one William Shakspeare as an evasive witness, having a conveniently short memory. The depositions disclose his intermediation in the matter of making two hearts happy, but not the faintest glimpse of the author of poems or plays. When the claim of authorship is challenged, new particulars of the life of Shakspeare, such as this and others which have been unearthed by antiquarians,—whether in the Public Record Office or Corporation Archives—are alike worthless as far as establishing the Author-Poet, Shakespeare's identity, or any connection between Player and Playwright.

There are no family traditions, no books or manuscripts; there are no letters addressed to him known to exist, but the letter in which Richard Quiney asked him for a loan of money, or by him to poet, peer or peasant.

The credible evidence supplied by contemporaneous and antiquarian research, does not identify player and householder of Stratford

with the author of "Hamlet," "Lear" and "Othello."

While on this subject the reader's indulgence is requested a little longer. Dr. Charles W. Wallace, in rummaging the Public Record archives, searching through musty documents which belong to the Court of Requests, found one case at court in which Shakspere is involved. "There are twenty-six documents in the case, nine mention Shakespeare by name. In the entire list his name occurs twenty-four times. One is his own deposition signed by his own hand" (in all probability). The body of the signed deposition is not in the hand writing of the deponent, who is described by the clerk as "William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the Countye of Warwicke gentleman," who when required to "perfect and subscribe his deposition," does not recognize that form of the name but signs himself "Willm Shak'p."

In these depositions, according to Dr. C. W. Wallace, "we have for the first time met Shakespeare (Shakspere) in the flesh and that the acquaintance is good." How so? Would you care to become acquainted with a man, who as intermediary, lured by persuasion a

poor young man into marriage, and then when summoned to be his star witness played forgetter? Young Bellott swallowed the bait of promised dower—"they (wear) made suer by Mr. Shakespeare and agreed to marrye."

Furthermore, Dr. Wallace tells us, out of the new evidence on Shakspeare now before us, that the family with whom Shakspeare lived was named Mountjoy. They were French, doubtless refugee Huguenots. The Mountjoy home was situated at the corner of Silver and Mugwell Streets, London, where Christopher Mountjoy was engaged in the making of head-dresses and wigs, assisted by one Stephen Bellott, an apprentice; also by the master's daughter and only child, Mary, who was a dabster in that art.

From the records in the present case at court, in which Shakspeare is involved, and which Dr. Wallace has unearthed in the Public Record Office, we read that "Madam Mountjoy told Shakespeare that if he could bring the young man, Stephen Bellott, to make a proposal of marriage, a dower should be settled upon them at marriage." This was the snug sum of fifty pounds in money of that

time, or approximately four hundred pounds, nearly \$2000, in money of today."

Shakspere was then living in the Mountjoy home—house and shop under one roof. "So he went to Stephen Bellott, then at the end of his sixth year of apprenticeship, and told him if he would make the offer of marriage there was good hope that Mary would accept and the old folks (shall promise to give) with the daughter a dowry of fifty pounds on the day of marriage." Daniel Nicholas, a near neighbor, testifies: "Mr. Shakespeare had told him they should have a sum of money for a portion from the father. They were made sure of this by Mr. Shakespeare by giving their consent and agreeing to marry, so he (Bellott) and the members of the family had several conferences concerning the marriage. Shakspere was present at some of these conferences, according to his own testimony. All details were arranged and the marriage was solemnized November 19th, 1604."

But disputes in families are as common as California poppies in April.

In 1612, trouble with Mountjoy and his son-in-law took Shakspere as witness into court, where we are told by what acts Shakspere got

into the case. No one would now have dreamed, as we shall see presently, of making such a shifty fellow as William Shakspeare witness in the further examination, after his answer to the fourth question in behalf of Bellott's set of interrogatories, when examined in court May 7th, 1612. For the depositions of the near neighbors as well as his own, prove how elusive and unreliable was his testimony. He cannot remember any of the important details concerning the dower promised, the talk had with Mountjoy,—“that the defendant (Mountjoy) promised to give the said complainant (Bellott) a portion in money with Mary, his daughter, but what certain portion, he (Shakspeare) remembereth not nor when to be paid.”

On June 19th the court ordered the further examination. “The question of chief concern to the parties involved and to the court, was what promises of dower did Shakspeare, as intermediary, make. Witnesses were again summoned, chief of whom was Shakspeare,” who was summoned (inferentially) for the sole purpose of retrieving a lost memory.

But notwithstanding, the plaintiff, who had Shakspeare summoned to answer the first set



of questions, May 7th, refused through his attorney, to have him summoned to answer the second set of questions which had been prepared for him on June 19th. "For the records show no summons issued to him and his name does not appear in the court list of witnesses for Bellott on that day. But the plaintiff (Bellott) was constrained to call in his own behalf other witnesses to prove what Shakspeare had said to them concerning the dower promised and the talk had with Mountjoy." "A fearful example of hearsay evidence," says Sir George G. Greenwood.

Daniel Nicholas is again summoned as a witness to show that Shakspeare harbored no forgetfulness when he talked with him about the promised dower, for he had also in like manner talked over the question of dower in the presence of Joan Johnson and William Eaton, as they both testify.

In the third and fourth interrogatory the witness shows unmistakably that Bellott was the victim of connubiality through the intermediation of one Mr. Shakespeare. This view seems to have been entertained by the court. For "on June 3rd, the court issued an unusual order referring the whole matter at variance

to the French Church (Hugenots) of London, and making the decision there the final decree of the court." The Church (Hugenots) decided in Bellott's favor.

Daniel Nicholas, a near neighbor, in his deposition, discloses the fact that Bellott was suspicious of Shakspeare, fearful that he may be influenced by the old man's (wigmaker) money bags, for he asked Daniel Nicholas, son of Ambrose Nicholas, former Lord Mayor, "to go to Shakespeare (Shakspeare), with his wife and find out what it was that the defendant (Mountjoy) had promised to give his daughter if she married with the plaintiff (Bellott)".

Bellott takes this precaution before he sues his father-in-law for the recovery of the sum promised at the time of marriage. Daniel Nicholas avers "that he did go to Shakspeare and that Shakspeare of Stratford, but sojourner with the wigmaker, told him that the defendant had promised the plaintiff fifty pounds or thereabouts with his daughter." But when Shakspeare was summoned he had forgotten, or pretended to forget the sum which the defendant, Mountjoy, promised to give his daughter.

The first French Church in London was established in 1550. Churches were subsequently founded by successive emigrations. The Edict of Nantes was revoked on the 22nd of October, 1685. It is estimated that nearly eighty thousand French Huguenots established themselves in England during the ten years which preceded and followed the Revocation, and about one-third of them settled in London. They carried with them the arts by which they had enriched their own country. These refugee people, having a strong feeling of fraternity, were disposed to cling together. They were forbidden to carry their fortunes abroad, but they came to uphold the supremacy of conscience and there was ultimately an almost absolute fusion, both of race and name.

This disposes of the Reverend Richard Davis' assertion in 1708, ninety-two years after Shakspeare of Stratford's death, that he "dyed a Papist." It is clear that the Stratford player could not have been a Catholic, but the question still remains what was the religious faith of the author of the Plays?

Dr. Wallace says, "the fact that Shakspeare and Wilkins are associated as witnesses in this case is highly suggestive, and thinks 'Shakes-

peare' as a pseudonym would be difficult to explain how he and Wilkins were interested in this suit." Dr. Wallace means the undivided personality of player and playwright and always uses the word "Shakespeare."

In looking the matter through we find nothing that is highly suggestive and difficult to explain, save to those only who stand fast in the Stratfordian faith, which identifies the Player with the Playwright.

We fail to see why "one Mr. Shakespeare that lay in the house"—boarded there—and George Wilkins, victualer, should not both become interested in this suit in behalf of young Bellott. One George Wilkins, an inn-keeper, where Bellott and his wife "came to dwell in one of his chambers," and "one Mr. Shakespeare, as intermediary in making two hearts happy." Wilkins, in his deposition, gave his occupation as an Inn-keeper. There is no difficulty about the matter, and nothing to explain, except that here the dispute about the name involves a dispute about the man. Is there anything presumptuous in our contention that when the author of "Venus and Adonis" signed the dedication to the Earl of Southampton with the name "Shakespeare," he

adopted as a pseudonym the militant form of the name which the Stratford Player never made use of?

Stephen Bellott in 1605, after having quarrelled with his father-in-law, who then compelled him to go in search of rooms to let, occupied a chamber with one George Wilkins.

That Shakspeare, in his deposition, did not give his business is a matter of regret. What a pity!

On May 7th, 1612, the court issued a peremptory summons to William Shakspeare and George Wilkins, in behalf of Bellott, to answer questions prepared for them. The only question of importance before the court was what promise of dower did Shakspeare, as intermediary, make. Shakspeare failed to satisfy the court in his answer against the fourth question,—the essential cause of action, the gist of the issue. The testimony of George Wilkins was not of importance, having reference only to the value of a few household goods, "and to the fact that Bellott and wife, after leaving their father in 1605, came to dwell in one of his chambers."

We have known nothing about Wilkins personally before, and know nothing about him

now, except that he was a victualer and inn-keeper, having a license to sell alcoholic liquors.

The conjecture of Delius that 'Shakespeare' (the author's pen name), and Wilkins, a hack writer for the stage, wrote two plays together is mere guesswork. For this statement we have no basis of proof.

Granting the collaboration of the playwrights does not connect the Stratford Player (Shakspere), "one Mr. Shakespeare," with literary works or with acts of dramatic composition. Neither does it give so much as a basis for presumption, much less proof of identification of the Stratford player with the playwright, or any bearing with the pseudonymous literature produced under a fictitious name "Shakespeare."

Dr. Wallace holds our inquisitive attention when he asserts that these documents in the case of Bellott vs. Mountjoy, confirm him (Shakspere) as being the author of the Plays that bear the name "Shakespeare." The truth is that all the documentary evidence unearthed by Dr. Wallace tends to show that the Stratford player was unknown in literary circles. What fact or facts confirm him—the Strat-

ford actor, Shakspeare,—as being the author of the Plays called “Shakespeare”?

However, with the Professor, it would seem when dealing with Shakespeare, no proposition is too absurd to be believed, for he asserts that Shakespeare “honours his host by raising him in the play (Henry V) to the dignity of a French Herald under his own name of Mountjoy.”

Whereas, in truth and in fact, the impersonal and official name of a French Herald “Mountjoy” is contained in Holinshed, where the author of Henry V found it.

The Chronicles were published in 1577, twenty-one years before “one Mr. Shakespeare that lay in the house” (lived there), with a French wig-maker, one Mountjoy in Silver Street.

The embarrassed Stratfordians have long been seeking for some explanation of the chief source of William Shakspeare’s wealth, and now after more than three hundred years, Dr. Charles W. Wallace discovers William Shakspeare of Stratford in Silver Street, London, “the region of money, a good seat for an userer” as Ben Jonson described it in “The Staple of News.”

1604, the year of Shakspeare's match-making intermediation, was also the year of the famous actor, Ned Alleyn's last recorded appearance on the stage, he having secured the post of master of the rayol game of bears, bulls and mastiffs, of the bating house at Paris Garden in Southwark. This was doubtless the chief source of Alleyn's great wealth, as interest-mongering in Silver Street, London, one of the centers in which speculative enterprises were conducted—was in all probability the chief source of the Stratford actor's (Shakspeare's) wealth. (The usurious Shakspeare practicing usury when the lending at interest was accociated with cruelty and was branded as immoral).

To link the interest-monger's name and personality with that of the author of the Plays is to debase our conception of the writer of that fadeless and imperishable drama, "The Merchant of Venice."

After reading all the evidence in the case submitted by Dr. Wallace, we are convinced that Shakspeare's statement before the Court of Requests was evasive and shifty, for his own deposition is a strong confirmation of the truth



of our assertion. "He gave himself so bad a character in it.'

Dr. Charles William Wallace, by never-tiring industry and indomitable energy, assisted by the gracious Lady, his wife, has examined "some million" of documents in the Public Record Office, London.

Although I cannot agree with Dr. Wallace in all his inferences with respect to Shakspeare of Stratford, nevertheless I gladly accord him due praise.

The foregoing facts, the legal and municipal evidence bound up in dusty records, a bogus coat-of-arms and a rude epitaph, tell the true story of the life of William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon.

There is no record of any pretended living likeness of Shakspeare better representing him than the Stratford bust. This bust is erected on the north side of the wall of Holy Trinity Church at Stratford-on-Avon. On the floor of the chancel, in front of the monument, are the graves of Shakspeare and a portion of his family—his father, mother, youngest daughter and son lie in unmarked graves. We have no means of ascertaining when the monument and bust were erected.

The first folio edition of his reputed works was published in 1623. It contained words from Leonard Diggs prefatory lines: "And time dissolves thy Stratford monument," monument being used interchangeably with tomb, but these words do not prove that the bust was set up before 1623.

It is the bladder-like expression in the physiognomy of the image which drew the exclamation,—“that never wrote this,” from a great artist standing before it and looking up at Shakspeare’s bust, with an open volume of Shakespeare’s works in hand. His image was rudely cut, sensual and clownish in appearance.

England was called in those days “The Toper’s Paradise,” and tradition (so-called) informs us that Shakspeare was one of the Bedford topers. However, we should not infer from this that William Shakspeare, a shewd man of business, was a drunken sot, although from his retirement or withdrawal from the-aterian activity, he may have “drunk too hard.”

Now we have no basis for proof, only a presumption that this is the reason why Dr. John Hall, Shakspeare’s son-in-law, made no men-

tion of his father-in-law's death in his book of "Cures" in the retrospect as in the case of his wife.

In Shakspeare's time Stratford contained thirty grog-shops. The diary of Thomas Greene, (Shakspeare's cousin) contains nothing on the subject of his kinsman's death,—perhaps he also was ashamed of the manner of it.

But it may jar the reader when told that the diarist has nothing to say about cousin Shakspeare's poems and plays. He did not seem to regard him as an author or person of much consequence.

The new information found in the Public Record Office by Dr. Wallace, suggests an amendment to the gossip, commonplace book compiled in 1662 by the Rev. John Ward. He tells the story, forty-six years after date, of "the merrie meeting" at the carousing board of Shakspeare, Drayton and Ben Jonson, and it seems "drank too hard for Shakspeare died of a fever then contracted."

Evidently the Vicar of Stratford did not know enough about the external life of the individual man, Shakspeare, to amend the local gossip for the sake of credibility and the inherent likelihood of the alleged facts. It

could not have been for the convenience and accommodation of Michael Drayton and Ben Jonson who must take a three days' journey to Stratford, through mud and mire, over roads infested with highwaymen, merely in order to sacrifice at the shrine of Bacchus, when they could have had their swill in London at the public house kept by George Wilkins, of the parish of St. Sepulchres.

The Wilkins tavern would have been chosen doubtless by the bibacious Ben for convenience and time saving, for he was hard at work bringing forth the great folio 1616 edition of his works. "We have known nothing about Wilkins individually" before his deposition in the case of Bellott vs. Mountjoy was found by Dr. Wallace in the Public Record Office. But his vocation as inn-keeper, having a license to sell alcoholic liquors, make it highly probable that he was a votary of Bacchus. However, the inventor of the yarn could have known but very little of the external life of Michael Drayton, always as "sober as a judge," decorous and undefiled, and could hardly have been a member of a scottish party. There is not a hint from Ben Jonson, in conversation with Drummond

of Hawthornden in 1618-19, of his "having had a merry meeting in 1616." So soon after the great fire of 1614 when a large part of Stratford lay in ashes.

At this time, be it remembered, Silver Street and vicinity, the region Shakspeare chose for residence, swarmed with French refugees,—Hugenots. Some of them, perhaps, met Shakspeare, the Stratford player, with his money bags, and found him holding with Shylock insistence to the letter of the law, "although the taking of interest was at that time regarded as forbidden to a Christian." ,

There is not a tittle of evidence adduced to show that a knowledge of Shakspeare's putative authorship of poems and plays was current at Stratford, when the first folio edition of his reputed works was published in 1623. The records attest that Shakspeare's fame repute, as writer, is posterior to this event. How strange it must seem to those who claim for Shakspeare an established reputation as poet and dramatist of repute, anterior to the first folio edition in 1623, that Dr. John Hall himself an author, and most advantaged of all the heirs by Shakspeare's death, should fail to

mention his father-in-law in his "cure book" or "Observations."

The earliest dated cure is 1617, the year following Shakspeare's death, but there are undated ones. In "Obs. XIX," Dr. Hall mentions without date, an illness of his wife, Mrs. Hall, and we find him making a note long afterwards in reference to his only daughter, Elizabeth, who was saved by her father's skill and patience. "Thus was she delivered from death and deadly diseases, and was well for many years."

The illness of Michael Drayton is recorded without date in "Obs. XXII" with its wee bit of a literary biography and he is referred to as "Mr. Drayton, an excellent poet." Had Shakspeare received a like mention as a poet or writer by one who knew him so intimately, what a delicious morsel it would have been to all those who have followed the literary antiquarian through the dreary barren waste of Shakespearean research. We have found nothing but husks, and these eulogists of Shakespeare—Hallam and Emerson—refuse to crouch.

For more than three centuries, the Stratford archives have contained all matters concerning

Shakspere's life and character, and have given us full knowledge of the man. Nothing has been lost seemingly but of his alleged literary life, there is not a crumb; no family traditions, no books, no manuscripts, no letters, no commendatory poems, plays, masques or anthology.

The biographers of William Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon have none of the material out of which poets and dramatists are made, but only those facts which are congruous with money lenders, land speculators, play brokers, actors and public land sharks. Also a good assortment of apocryphal stories and gossipy yarns, which have become traditional currency.

Not having found the slightest trace of Shakespeare in 1592, as writer of plays, or as adapter or elaborator of other men's work, except conjecturally, his advent into literature must have been at a later date, if at all. In 1593 "Venus and Adonis" appeared in print with a dedication to Lord Southampton and signed "William Shakespeare." Bear in mind that the dedicator of a book need not in those days to be its author.

In 1594 appeared another poem "Lucrece"

also with a dedication to Lord Southampton. The poems bore no name of an author on the title page. Here is literary tangibility, but does it establish the identity of their author, or attest the responsibility of the young Stratford man for the poems which were published under the name of "Shakespeare?" This was the first mention of the now famous name. Was it a pseudonym or was it the true name of the author of the poems? Every person of fair erudition and common sense has a right to his own opinion, but the present writer can see no strong and valid evidence of any personal connection with the Stratford Shakspeare in the works called Shakspearean, which were produced in the main, under a fictitious name, and should be characterized as our greatest anonymous and pseudonymous literature.

Furthermore, the enthusiastic reception of the poems awakens a suspicion when we learn that their popularity was due to a belief in their lasciviency, and that the dedicatee was the dissolute self-willed Henry Wriothesley, third Earle of Southampton, and that the name of the dedicator "Shakespeare" was one of a class of nick-names which in 1593 still re-



tained in some measure that which was derisive in them.

A student of Merton College, Oxford, changed his own name of Hugh Shakspere into Saunders, because he considered it too expressive and distinctive of rough manners, and significant of degradation and as such was unwilling to aid in its hereditary trasmission, when all that is derisive in the name Shakspere *vile reputation* remained fixed and fossilized in the old meaning. Primarily the name has no militant signification.

Sir Sidney Lee admits that the Earle of Southampton is the only patron of Shakespeare that is known to biographical research (p. 126). By what fact or facts, may we ask, is the authenticity of the Earle's friendship or patronage attested? Southampton was the standing patron of all the poets, the stock dedicatee of those days. It was the fashion of the times to pester him with dedications by poets, grave and gay. They were after a piece of money, five or six pounds which custom constrained his Lordship to yield for having his name enshrined in poet's lines.

Almost all the poets of that age were dependents, and there is, with few exceptions,

the same display of Pharisaic sycopyhancy, greediness, and on the part of dedicatee, an inordinate desire for adulation. Every student of Elizabethan literature and history should know that the so-called Southampton-Shakespeare friendship cannot be traced biographically. The Earle of Southampton was a voluminous correspondent, but did not bear witness to his friendship for Shakespeare.

A scrutinous inspection of Southampton papers contained in the archives of his family descendants and contemporaries, yields nothing in support of the contention that Southampton's friendship or patronage is known to biographical research! and it is as attestative as that other apocryphal story out of the supposable mouth of Sir William D'Avenant and preserved by Nicholas Rowe, that my Lord Southampton at one time gave him (Shakspeare) "a thousand pounds to enable him to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to." D'Avenant gave out that he was a son of Shakspeare. One thousand pounds in 1596 was equal to at least twenty thousand dollars today. The magnitude of the gift discredits the story, nevertheless, the startled Rowe is the first to make it current,

but does not give his readers the ground for his assurance. Be it what it may, he could hardly satisfy the modern reader that this man (D'Avenant) a son, who insinuatingly defiles the name and fair fame of his own mother, is a credible witness, for in degrading his mother, "he did but annul the legitimacy of his own birth."

The truth is, the social rules of Tudor and Jacobin times did not permit peer and peasant to live on terms of mutual good feeling. In those times they had a summary way of dealing with humble citizens. A nobleman to vindicate rank, brought an action in the Star Chamber against a person who had orally addressed him as Goodman. Morley, Chapman and Jonson were imprisoned for having displeased the King by a jest in a play "Eastward Ho," all on account of John Marston's jocularities, who was associated with them, and of the arbitrary attitude of the crown.

The *literati* of those days found in scholastic learning neither potency nor promise to abrogate class distinction by giving a passport to high attainment in literature, science, poetry and high art. Ben Jonson says, "The time was when men were had in price for learning, now

letters only make men vile. He is unbraid-  
ingly called a poet, as if it was a contemptible  
nickname."

Edmund Spencer endeavored to propitiate Lord Burleigh, minister of state, by offering an apology for being a poet. Thus we are made acquainted with the socialities of everyday life in that "long gone time" and also how little some persons know who write books to uphold the Stratford delusion, more especially when they assert that such men as the Earl of Essex, the Earl of Southampton and Sir Walter Raleigh were Shakspeare's intimate acquaintances.

But we are on safe ground when we claim for him yoke fellowship with the actors, for Shakspeare's will attests the fact that Burbage, Heming and Condell were his yoke mates.

"I give and bequeath to my fellows, John Heming, Richard Burbage and Henry Cundell, twenty-six shillings, eight pence apiece to buy them rings."

Ben Jonson and the poets were not remembered in Shakspeare's will. Why?

But according to the upholders of the Stratford Faith, Shakspeare in his life time is made to associate with Drayton and Ben Jonson, by

what Mr. Phillips calls "a late but apparently genuine tradition," who in the fullness of their desire to discover Shakspeare, the Stratford actor in affiliation with poets, make the subject of their memoir die from the effects of a drunken carousal.

Sir Henry Irving in his address at the University of Oxford, says, "Richard Burbage was the first great actor that England ever saw, (and adds) unfortunately, we have no record of the intercourse between Shakspeare and Burbage. But there must have existed a close friendship. We differ with the learned Thespian, for fortunately or unfortunately, we have a wee little record of the intercourse between Shakspeare and Burbage. The only story recorded during player Shakspeare's life time and is contained in the note book of the English Barrister, John Maningham, a student of the Legal Inn. It savors strongly of the tavern, criminating player Shakspeare's morals the transcription of which would sully these pages. The barrister had made an entry in his note book. 2—February of the same year 1601, giving a brief abstract of a play which he had witnessed, called "Twelve Night," and in recording the story six weeks later, fails

to confirm the players identification with the author of "Twelfth Night."

"Love's Labor Lost" was performed at the house of the Earl of Southampton for the amusement of Anna of Denmark in 1604, but Burbage alone is mentioned. No coupling of the names of Southampton and Shakspeare as a testimony of their friendship. Sir Walter Cope had spent a whole morning in hunting for "players, jugglers and such kind of creatures" as Sir Walter styles them in writing to Lord Cramborne. Sir Sidney Lee tells us that "the state papers and business correspondence of Southampton were enlivened by references to his literary interest and his sympathy with the birth of English drama." (p. 382).

However, the Southampton papers and letters contain no reference to Shakespeare. There is nothing to show that he was acquainted with the author of the plays or the Stratford player, notwithstanding he was present at the performance of "The Comedy of Errors" at Grays Inn in 1594, when the Stratford player Shakspeare was an acting member of the "company of base and common fellows."

Southampton zest for the drama is based on the statement contained in the "Sidney

Papers" 1599. "My Lord Southampton and Lord Rutland come not to the court. The one doth but very seldom they pass away the tyme in London merely in going to plays every day."

"When a new library for his old college, St. Johns, was in course of construction, Southampton collected books to the value of three hundred and sixty pounds wherewith to furnish it." However, Southampton's literary tastes and sympathy with the drama cannot be drawn from his gift to the library, for it consisted largely of legends of the saints and mediaeval chronicles. Manifestly this is the way the Earl cherished his passion for literature during the closing years of his life. Had the benefaction contained but one Shakespeare play, it would now be more highly prized by the authorities of the University on the river Cam than all this mediaeval lore, which may still be seen on the shelves of the College library. And, furthermore, this would be some proof of the fascination the drama had for Southampton, and serve in some slight measure to rescue the reputed Southampton Shakespeare friendship and patronage from limbo.

When and where did Shakespeare acknowl-

edge his obligations to the only patron of the dramatist, according to Sir Sidney Lee, who is known to biographical research, not one of the Shakespeare plays was dedicated to Southampton. The name Shakespeare is conspicuously absent from among the distinguished writers of his day.

Who in panegyrical speech and song acclaimed Southampton's release from prison in 1603? Sir Sidney Lee says, "Every note in the scale of adulation was sounded in Southampton's honor in contemporary prose and verse." That is true for every hungry weary Willy (poet) of the Muse is represented in "the scale of adulation." And Sir Sidney Lee has excerpted many lines from the poets in proof of Southampton's literary predilections. But not a single line from Shakespeare. Why? Because there is nothing capable of being extracted.

Still we find this earnest Stratfordian engaged in an effort to unmask Peer and Poet in (No. CVII) of the enigmatical "Shakespeare Sonnets." Tom Nash makes a bid for the Earl's patronage in the hope of making money, as he admitted, in those days, literary men died of hunger. However, his note in the



"Scale of adulation" is contained in a coarse love poem, dedicated to Southampton. "A new brain he vociferates, a new soul will I get me to canonize your name to posterity." In the same absurd fashion, Nash adulated Sir Philip Sidney, "the least syllable of whose name sounded in the ears of judgment is able to give the meanest line he writes a dowry of immortality."

In an adulatory sonnet, Barnabe Barns tells us that Southampton "hand is thrice sacred and his eyes, those heavenly lamps which give the Muses light—that holy fire—"

But Gervase Markham sounded a blasphemous note when he asserted that Southampton's sweet voice hushed the music of the Spheres" and delighted the ear of Almighty God."





The Tragick Historie of  
H A M L E T  
Prince of Denmarke.

Enter two Centinels. { now call'd Barnardo  
- Francisco -

1. S T and : who is that?

2. S T is I.

1. O you come most carefully vpon your watch,

2. And if you meete *Marcellus* and *Horatio*,  
The partners of my watch, bid them make haste.

1. I will : See who goes there.

*Enter Horatio and Marcellus.*

*Hor.* Friends to this ground.

*Mar.* And leegemen to the Dane,

O farewell honest souldier, who hath releued you?

1. *Barnardo* hath my place, giue you good night.

*Mar.* Holla, *Barnardo*.

2. Say, is *Horatio* there?

*Hor.* A peece of him.

2. Welcome *Horatio*, welcome good *Marcellus*.

*Mar.* What hath this thing appear'd againe to night.

2. I haue scene nothing.

*Mar.* *Horatio* sayes tis but our fantasie,

And wil not let belife take hold of him,

Touching this dreaded fight twice scene by vs;

B

There-





# Shakespeare

IN UMBRA.





# Shakespeare

IN UMBRA.





## PART III

### SHAKE-SPEARE      SHAKESPEARE THE LITERARY ASPECT

Let Schollers bee as thriftie as they may.  
They will be poore ere their last dying  
    daye;  
Learning and povertie  
Will ever kisse.

—*Parnassus Trilogy (1597-1601)*.



## THE LITERARY ASPECT

## VI.

FIRST literary form of Name A Pseudonym. *nom de plume*. The vocabulary of the Author of the Plays show what books he read and the company he kept. By the study of words he became a mine of thoughts and by constant reading accumulated his astonishing vocabulary, the storehouse of language which furnishes his characters with apt expressions in which his thoughts enshrine his genius. The sublime conceptions which are displayed in his dramatic writings confirm him to be the greatest writer the world ever saw.

That there were two "Shakespeares"—"Shake-speare" the Author and Shakespeare the Player, I would disabuse every reader of such an absurdity. My contention is that the immortal Plays were written by a man whose true name was *not* Shakespeare, however, the name is spelled Shake-speare,—(a mask—name—*nom de plume*.)

The name, we are told, was spelled some twenty or thirty different ways, but the Player himself uiniformly wrote "Shakspere," and the form "Shakespeare" or "Shake-speare" was never recognized by him. However, I am not concerned about the variants of the Stratford Player's name, inasmuch as my contention is not buttressed by the spelling. Nevertheless, as he wrote it "Shakspere" and as some unknown other wrote the Author's (pen-name) as "Shakespeare," must have been pronounced differently, as implied by the spelling, more especially when printed with a hyphen in this form—"Shake-speare," an excellent *nom de plume*. Possibly suggested to the Author of the Plays by the noted inventor of mask-names and signer of dedications, Edward Kirk, who was the editor and commentator of Spencer's earliest work, and who may have performed a like service for the Author of the Plays and poems. The true name of the man who published under the pen-name of Shake-speare or Shakespeare was never revealed.

Francis Meres, a student in Divinity, pretender to superior knowledge, author of God's Arithmetic, had his Palladis Tamia (Wit's Treasury) registered September 7th, 1598

and published shortly after. Meres says: "As the Greek tongue is made famous and eloquent by Homer, Hesiod, Euripides, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Pindanus, Phocyledes, and Aristophanes, and the Latin tongue by Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Silius, Italicus, Lucanus, Lucretius, Ansonius and Claudianus, so the English tongue is mightily enriched and gorgeously invested in rare ornaments and resplendent habiliments by Sir Philip Sidney, Spenser, Daniel Drayton, Warner, Shakespeare, Marlow and Chapman." Meres writes of the mellifluous and honey tongued Shakespeare—of his "Venus and Adonis" his "Lucrece" and his sugared sonnets. Among his private friends, the "book called Shakespeare's Sonnets" was published in 1609, eleven years after the Meres reference in 1598, and in the next year, two of them (138 and 144) were printed in "The Passionate Pilgrim." Mr. Hallam expressed a doubt whether these were the sonnets mentioned by Meres.

However, Meres enumerated twelve plays, seven of which had been published anonymously; one only "Love's Labour Lost" has been published with Shakespeare's name. Nevertheless, Meres, Carew and Weever,

hack writers all, write tritely of the honey tongued, the honey sweet and the "sugared".

With Francis Meres everything written is mellifluent, but who this "Shakespeare" was, he does not claim to know any more than his contemporaries knew about the real name and personality of "Martin Mar-Prelate", whose identity was never revealed, and is still a mystery as deep as ever "Junius" was. In fact, no contemporary made the slightest effort to illustrate "Shakespeare" the author-poet's individual life.

As a chronicler, Meres is unreliable; all modern commentators reject his list of Shakespearean plays. Meres asserted that Ben Jonson was one of our best authors for tragedy, when at that time, 1598, Jonson had not written a single tragedy, and but one comedy. Meres mentions Chapman as one of the best of our poets for both tragedy and comedy, although at this period, Chapman had published but one drama.

William Gager is also included in Meres list of 1598 of the chief dramatist of the day among writers of comedy, when the fact is with the exception of his single comedy "Rivals" no longer extant, they were Latin trage-

dies. Before we transcribe in part "Palladis Tamia" by Francis Meres, we ask the reader's pardon for the abuse of their patience, for Meres merely repeats names of Greek, Latin and modern play makers.

"As the tragic poets flourished in Greece, Aeschylus, Euripedes, Sophocles, Alexander, Aetolus, Achaens, Erithriaens, Astydama, Atheninsis, Apollodorus, Torsennis, Nicomachus, Phygus, Therpis, Atticans and Timon, Appolloniates; and then among the Latins, Accim, M. Attilius, Pomponiys, Secundus and Seneca. So these are our best for tragedy; the Lord Buckhurst, Doctor Legge of Cambridge, Doctor Edes of Oxford; Maister Edward Ferris the author of the Mirrour for Magistrates; Marlow, Peele, Watson, Kyd, Shakespeare, Drayton, Chapman, Decker and Benjamin Johnson."

The best poets for comedy (Meres proceeds with his enumeration, naming sixteen Greeks and ten Latins, twenty-six in all).

"So the best for comedy amongst us be Edward Earle of Oxford, Doctor Gager of Oxford, Maister Rowley, once a rare Scholler of learned Pembroke Hall in Cambridge; Maister Edwards, one of her Majesties Chappell

eloquent and wittie John Lily, Lodge, Gascoyne, Greene, Shakespeare, Thomas Nash, Thomas Heywood, Anthony Munday. Our best ploters are Chapman, Porter, Wilson, Hathway and Henry Chettle."

Francis Meres does not seem to have considered it necessary to read before reviewing. Had he done so he would not have placed the name of Lord Buckhurst first in his list, giving primacy to this mediocrist and the author of *Romeo and Juliet*, whoever he was, ninth in his enumeration of dramatic poets which he considered best among the English for tragedy, nor would he have named for second place on the list, Dr. Legge of Cambridge instead of the author of "*The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*" (Marlow).

What has Dr. Edwards of Oxford, whose name stands fourth in the Meres list, written that he should have been mentioned in the same connection with the author of "*The White Devil*" (Webster) or the author of that English classic, "*The Conspiracy and The Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron*" (Chapman). Why this commingling of such insignificant writers as Edward, Earl, Thomas



Wotson and Lord Buckhurst with the giant brotherhood. The fact is so far as attesting the responsibility of anybody or anything, the Meres averments are as worthless as a musty nut. What was said of John Aubury is also true of Francis Meres: "His brain was like a hasty pudding, whose memory and judgment and fancy were all stirred together." Yet this is the writer that many Shakespearean commentators confidently appeal to in part, and whose testimony in part they with equal unanimity reject. The fact is the modern Shakespearean commentators have torn the Meres list into tatters. *Andronicus* is universally rejected. Mr. Lowell denies the total authenticity of *Richard III* for Shakespeare, he says, "never wrote deliberate nonsense."

Mr. Fleay finds in the *Romeo and Juliet* traces of George Peele and Samuel Daniel, and that there are grave doubts as to Shakespeare's hand in "*The Comedy of Errors*." Most modern commentators doubt if the "*Two Gentlemen of Verona*" could have been written by Shakespeare. King John mentioned by Meres was doubtless the old play of "*The Troublesome Reign of King John*," first printed in 1591, and was three times published

before the first printing of Shakespeare's King John in the folio of 1623, which was worked after the old play. There is no such play as "Love's Labour Won."

Not finding Shakespeare in the anthology of his day, the most natural inference would be that all those who wrote under the name "Shakespeare," wrote "*incognito*." We know that many writers of that day wrote anonymously for the stage. Many of the anonymous and pseudonymous writings have been retrieved. Much remains still to be reclaimed from the siftings of what are named "Early Comedy," "Early History" and "Pre-Shakespearean Group of Plays."

Mr. Spedding had the good fortune to be the first to demonstrate the theory of a divided authorship of "Henry VIII," to reclaim for John Fletcher Wolsley's Farewell to all his greatness. A majority of the best critics now agree with Miss Jane Lee in the assignment of the second and third part of Henry VI to Marlow, Greene and perhaps Peele.

Many writers of that age were communistic in the use of the "Shakespeare" as a descriptive title, standing for the collocuted works of not one but several playmakers. In

the list before me there are twelve plays which were not included in the folio of the collected works of William Shakespeare in 1623. Although resting upon title page proprietorship and in the absence of certified authorship, *The Yorkshire Tragedy* and *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* are equally tenable. So thought the printers as we learn by their frequent use of the pseudonymous name of the author of "*Venus and Adonis*," a sensual poem which had been very popular.

The plays referred to which bore the imprinted name of "Shakespeare" were these: *Arthur of Eversham*, *The London Prodigal*, *Loarine*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, *Thomas Lord Cromwell*, *Edward III*, *The Birth of Merlin*, *Mucedonis*, *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, *Yorkshire Tragedy*, *Arraignement of Paris*, *Puritan*, *Widow of Watling Street*.

The difficulty of identifying Shakespeare the author poet with the young man who came up from Stratford, has induced Shakespearean scholars to question the unity of authorship. Sir Sidney Lee admits that Shakespeare "drew largely" on the *Hamlet*, referred to by Nash in 1589, which he has ascribed to Kyd (p. 221).

It is scarcely possible, says Mr. Marshall, "to maintain that the play referred to as well known in 1589 could have been by Shakespeare (Shakspeare) the "Stratfordian." Surely not. We see the question of the unity of authorship involves the question of his identity, for according to Shakespearean scholarship, the "Works" in part at least are a batch of anonymous plays worked over and labeled "Shakespeare."

There is strong presumptive proof that printers and publishers in Elizabethan and Jacobin times were in the habit of selecting names or titles that would best sell their books, and it mattered not to publishers if the name printed on the title page was a personal name or one impersonal. Title pages were not even presumptive proof of authorship in the time of Queen Elizabeth and King James. The printers chose to market their publications under the most favorable conditions and some writers and printers chose the incognizable name—"Shakespeare" which had been attached to the voluptuous poem "Venus and Adonis," 1593, which had a wide popularity resting on its supposed dissoluteness.

This was the first appearance of the name

"Shakespeare" in literature, being the mask-name doubtless of the writer who gave this erotic poem to the world "the first heir of my invention."

Certified authorship in that age as to the great body of the works produced is the exception, rather than the rule, for many writers of that age wrote anonymously and pseudonymously. Edmund Spenser until the beginning of 1580 wrote and published under an assume name "*Immerito*."

The authorship of the Shepherd's Calendar was not formally acknowledged or certified to until after it had gone through several editions by "the unknown poet" as he is called by the old commentator. After the certification by the author of the work, after seven years, the critics referred to Spenser as "the late unknown poet or the person who wrote 'The Shepherd's Calendar.'"

In 1586 William Webbe published his "Discourse of English Poetrie." In this the author of "The Shepherd's Calendar" is spoken of by the mask name "Immerito," given by its editor E. K. (Edward Kirk) a friend and fellow student of the author at Pembroke, who was the editor and commentator of Spenser's

earliest work, the pseudonymous "Shepherd's Calendar." It was praised by a contemporary poet, George Whitstone, himself a friend of Spencer, as the reputed work by Sir Philip Sidney. Raleigh, Lodge, Drayton, Nash and Sidney paid homage to Spencer.

Spencer wrote nine comedies, but every trace has perished. Not one in fifty of the dramas of this period according to Holliwell-Phillipps having descended to modern times.

The plays contained in the first and second folio, (1647-1679) of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedies and tragedies number fifty-three; but only three were published in Beaumont's lifetime, and that on none of them does Beaumont's name appear as author. Fletcher survived his partner nine years.

Robert Burton (1576-1649), author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, maintained his incognito for a time, he avers, because it gave him greater freedom.

John Marston (1575-1634) applied his own mask-name "Kimayder" to his antagonist and purposely ridicules himself.

Michael Drayton (1563-1631) also had written at this period under the pseudonym

of Rowland. At about this time likewise in France, Jean Baptiste (Popuelin), (1622-73) preferred to be known as Moliere, whose original manuscripts are not to be found, but as one of the great identities of his age, are not essential to illustrate his individual life. He was the particular personal favorite of Louis XIV, who bestowed lavishly his benefits upon Moliere. He had given him a pension of seven thousand livres and a position near the King as groom-of-the-chamber. The great monarch had been delighted to stand godfather to one of his children, to whom the Duchess of Orleans was godmother.

In consequence of failing health, his saddened friends on the 17th of February, 1673, entreated him not to have any play. "What would you have me do," he replied, "there are fifty poor workmen who have but their day's pay to live upon. What will they do if we have no play? I should reproach myself with having neglected to give them bread for one single day if I could really help it."

How beautifully Moliere's benevolent actions blend with his sweet words. He was ever mindful of the pressure with which the common ills of life fall upon the poor.

In more recent times, Francois Marie Aronet (1694-1778) won enduring fame as Voltaire. Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* was disguised on its appearance in 1748.

The famous work "Eikon Basilike" which appearing soon after the execution of Charles First as his work, was a potent factor in that reaction which culminated in the Restoration of the House of Stuart. Burnet says it had "the greatest run in many impressions of any book of the age."

Many years after its first appearance, John Gauden, Bishop of Exeter in 1660, laid claim to its authorship. Sir Walter Scott maintained his incognito as the great unknown for years like "Junius" whose secret was intrusted to no one, and was never to be revealed. Sir Walter preserved his secret until driven to the brink of financial destruction.

We believe that the author of "Hamlet," "Lear" and "Macbeth" chose to sheath his private life and personality as a man of letters in an impenetrable incognito—the nothingness of a name.

The author (Puttenham) of "The Arts of English Poesie," an anonymous work published in 1589, says, "I know very many



notable gentlemen in the court that have written commendably, and suppressed it agayne, or else suffered it to be publisht without their owner's name to it, as if it were a discredit for a gentleman to seeme learned and to show himself amorous of any good Arte."

As these things were so, does it jar you or you to discover a cultured nobleman, the Earl of Derby, writing plays for the common players in the year 1599, the same year in which his Lordship or some unknown other wrote *Henry V* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Mr. James Greenstreet had the good fortune to discover the intercepted dispatch written by a foreign ambassador to his home government. This piece of information was discovered by accident in the place in which the English Public Records are kept. The courtier's reason for concealment was to shun the presumption of living by his pen. For the Elizabethan notable gentleman-poet scorned the professional poet and considered publishing stage poetry a degradation. It is ridiculous, says the great Advocate John Selden (1584-1654), "for a lord to print verses; 'tis well enough to make them to please himself, but to make them public is foolish." So we

see that plain people were not the only ones who wrote plays in this great poetic age.

But the upper classes—great folks, had taken a hand in writing plays “on the sly.” Robert Greene in his introductory address to the gentlemen students of both universities, refers to certain devotional poets “which from their calling and gravities being loath to have any profane pamphlets pass under their hand, get some *Batillus* to set his name to their verses. Thus is the ass made proud by this underhand brokerie. And he that cannot write true English without the help of clerks of parish churches will needes make him selfe the father of interludes.”

What do we know about the individual life of the author of the plays, who among all the great men of his age was the greatest answer—nothing that can be authenticated. The Stratfordians deny the truth of this statement, and in their attempt at refutation, point to the Shakespeare-Southampton dedication of *Venus and Adonis* as a memorable poem which they allege is proof of certified authorship.

But are we to accept it (*Venus and Adonis*) as a memorable poem? Surely not in an age

when printers wrote dedications. When editors invented and signed the mask name while the author maintained an impenetrable incognito as in the case of Edmond Spencer. When the *Shepherd's Calendar* was printed pseudonymously by the editor E. K., who invented and signed Spencer's pen name.

No reputed play bore the name "Shakespeare" on the title page until 1598. Thomas Lodge (1556-1625) in his prose satire "*Wits Misery*," dated 1596, enumerates the wits of the time. Shakespeare is not mentioned.

Peter Heylin was born in 1599 and died in 1662, thus being seventeen years old when Shakspeare, the Stratford player died in 1616. In reckoning up the famous dramatic poets of England, he omits "Shakespeare."

Philip Henslow, the old play broker, also in writing his note book from 1591 to 1609, does not even mention "Shakespeare," although he records the title of no fewer than 270 plays. Henslow was in theatrical partnership with the famous "Ned Allen" in connection with the Rose and Fortune Theatres; Edward Alleyn personated in "*Leir the Moore of Venis*," "*Romeo, Pericles and Henry VIII*," "as appears from his inventory

of his own theatrical wardrobe." Henslowe records in his Diary on June 9th, 1594, that Hamlet was performed by his company (p. 180). Both Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps and Sir Sidney Lee say that Shakespeare began his career as a dramatist by writing plays for the manager, Philip Henslowe at the Rose Theatre. And yet Henslowe makes no mention of Shakespeare, (p. 24-8).

According to Henslow's Diary (note book), Henry the Sixth was performed as a new play in March, 1591. This is conjectured to be the play referred to by Nash, acted by "Lord Strange's men" at the Rose in 1592. This was not the company to which Shakspeare the Stratford player belonged.

Milton's poem on Shakespeare (1630) was not published in his works in 1645. This eulogy was prefixed to the folio edition of Shakespeare (1632) but without Milton's name. It's pedigree was not at all satisfactory. Milton's acquaintance with Shakespeare's verse must have been very slight, as shown by the lines,—

"Or sweetest Shakespere fancy's  
child  
Warbles his native wood notes wild,"

for had he read "Venus and Adonis," so classical and formal, he would agree with Walter Savage Landor that no poet was ever less a warbler of "wood notes wild."

Now in fact, after the publication of the first folio edition in 1623, all the later testimonies are repetitious, suggestions inspired by Ben Jonson's famous ascription to Shakespeare, which he wrote for the syndicate of printers and publishers, with a view to the sale of the work in 1623.

The slight mention of Shakespeare by the judicious Webster, as Hazelt calls him, comprehends no more than that he mistook a pseudonymous author for one of the hack-writers of the day. "Detraction is the sworn friend to ignorance, for mine own part, I have ever truly cherished my good opinion of other mens' worthy labors, especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman, the labored and understanding works of Master Jonson, the no less worthy composures of the both worthily excellent masters Beaumont and Fletcher, and lastly (without wrong last to be named) the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakespeare, Master Dekker and Master Heywood."

These words written by the second greatest English tragic poets are very significant, for Shakespeare's distinctive characteristics are not individualized from those of Dekker and Heywood, while those of Chapman, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher are.

In the last four named is perfect interlacement of personality with authorship, but not so in Shakespeare, for industry is the only distinguishing mark which he must share with Dekker and Heywood, hack writers for the stage. Dekker's many plays attest his copious industry, when we remember that this writer spent seven years in prison, and Heywood's industry cannot be doubted for he claimed to have had a hand or main finger in two hundred and twenty plays. Bear in mind when the preface to Webster's tragedy, "The White Devil," which contains this slight mention of Shakespeare was printed in 1612, after all the immortal plays were written and the now reputed author had returned to Stratford, probably in 1611-1612 in his forty-seventh year, where he lived in idleness for five years before his death from the effect of a drunken carousal, according to a so-called late tradition, which some Stratfordians employ, not as an

aspersion, but merely to show that the Stratford actor lead a jolly life.

John Webster possessed a critical faculty and an independent judgment, but the way he makes mention of Shakespeare shows that he knew nothing about the individual man or the works called "Shakespeare."

The generous reference to "the labored and understanding works of Master Jonson," gives a clear idea of the main characteristics of the work of Ben Jonson who, not having reached the fruition of his renown in 1612, but in the after time came into Dryden's view as "The greatest man of the last age, the most learned and judicious writer any theatre ever had." John Webster writes also of the "no less worthy composures of Beaumont and Fletcher." Thus in the morning of life they present an excellent type for purity of vocabulary and neatness of expression, and were of "loudest fame; Two of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays were acted to one of Shakespeare's or Ben Jonson's" in Dryden's time 1631-1700.

John Webster's judgment of his fellow dramatist was just. "I have ever truly cherished my good opinion of other men's worthy

labors." Webster never conceals or misrepresents the truth by giving evasive or equivocating evidence. He reveals the judicial trait of his character in placing Chapman first among cognizant poets then living, assuming the name "Shakespeare" was used as an assumed name, masking the true name of the greatest English poet. Sidney Marlowe and Spencer had then descended to the tomb.

The play actor, William Shakspere in his life time was not publicly credited with the personal authorship of the plays and poems called "Shakespeare," except possibly by three or four poeticules such as Freeman, Barnfield, Weever and Meres, who follow each other in the iteration and reiteration of the same insipid and affected compliments, not one of them implying a personal acquaintance with the author, but who erroneously take one person for another, thus identifying the wrong individuality. Some few persons may have believed that the player and playwright were one and the same person and were deceived into so believing. This much we do know that the Stratford actor never openly sanctioned the identification, although he may have been accessory to the deception and in this



connection, it should be borne in mind also that no poet was remembered in Shakspeare's will as were the actors.

Of the thirty-six plays assigned by the folio of 1623, not one had received the acknowledgment of their reputed author (Shakespeare). Not a single line in verse or prose assented to for comparison and identification, and in the absence of credible evidence of (the author's true name) his authorship of certain poems, there can be no authoritative sanction of the assignment. No person writing on the subject of "Shakespeare" can write a literary life of the individual man, for player Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon does not offer a single point of correspondence to the activities of a literary man or scholar.

The fantastical critics profess to read the story of the author's life in his works. This is an absurdity, for dramatic art is mainly character creation and cannot be made to disclose a knowledge of his private life.

Forty-six years after the death of William Shakspeare of Stratford, "The gentle-humored" Thomas Fuller in his "Worthies," published posthumously in 1662, wrote "Many were the wit combats betwixt him and Ben

Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man of war. Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning solid, but slow in his performance, Shakespere with the English man of war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds by the quickness of his wit and invention."

Fuller being born in 1608 was only eight years old when player Shakspere of Stratford died and but two years old when he quit London. If this precocious youngster beheld the "wit combats" of the two, he could only have beheld them as he lay "mewling and puking in his nurse's arms."

The facts are when the quaint and witty Fuller was six years old, his father was rector of St. Peter's in Aldwinkle. The boy was sent to school in his native village and continued at that school for four years. It's not likely that the lad was in London during player Shakspere's lifetime.

Shakespeare's contemporaries had nothing to say, in fact, and in criticism of either author or works of any consequence during the life time of the Stratford player. All the great

men of his time were strangers to him. No sage, no statesman, no orator, no man of literary eminence whatever left any description of "Shakespeare's" manner as a writer. Is it possible that the great men of that age, John Selden, Sir Walter Raleigh, Inigo Jones, Drayton, Hobbes, Spencer, Daniel, Chapman, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher could have read the immortal plays and not have preceded Mr. James Spedding in handing down to posterity something about Shakespeare. "Close packed expression, the same life and reality and freshness, the same rapid and abrupt turnings of thought, so quick that language can hardly follow fast enough." So transcendent was Shakespeare's genius for expression.

No wonder Dr. Ingleby is led to say that "it is plain that the bard of our admiration was unknown to the men of that age."

But Sir Sidney Lee boldly asserts (p. 586), that at Shakespeare's death "no mark of honor was denied his name." There is no intimation of the truth of any such an assertion in the records of integrity. This is only one of the Stratfordian assertions without proof.

However, the matter of fact to be accentuated

ated is that the contemporaries of the writer of the immortal plays did not know positively *who* wrote them. *We* do not know positively who wrote them, and our latest posterity, when holy Trinity's monuments, turrets and towers shall have crumbled and commingled with the shrined dust of "him who sleeps by Avon," may not know *who* wrote them.

Suppose now we go to Parnassus Hill for perfect vision above the mists of fabulation and spurious traditions, and examine the "Parnassus Trilogy." We shall see that the aim of the Cambridge dramatist is to exhibit the trials and sufferings of poor scholars; the selfishness and haughty demeanor of the common players who are made sport of in the later scene of Part III of *The Return*. The University writer introduces Burbage and Kemp, two actors of repute who are made to appear as professionals, tutoring candidates for the common stage, saying one thing and meaning the opposite.

The Cambridge ironist seems to praise that which he really means to condemn and in mockery, conveys an insult in the form of a compliment, when Kemp the Morris dancer of the professional stage is made to observe

before an academic audience, that university plays imbibe too much odor of the schools. We see the Morris-dancer (Kemp) brought forward as the type of ignorance in the professional player who thinks that *Metamorphosis* is a writer. When these words were spoken in Clare Hall, St. John's College, Cambridge, at the very headquarters of stagecraft, when the chronic clashing between town and gown was at its height, the gray old walls of the College Hall must have resounded with a roar of derisive laughter.

Still it is claimed by the Stratfordians that this play clearly identifies Shakespeare, the Poet and Shakspeare the player. The point is, says Mr. Lang, "that Kemp recognizes Shakespeare as both actor and author." The point which Mr. Lang has missed is that the ironist is setting up Kemp, the clown, as the type of ignorance and Shakspeare the actor as the type of imposition and pretention in the strolling player.

The writer of the "Parnassus Trilogy" is unknown, but whomsoever he may have been was a very accurate and close observer of men and events; who makes us see the scholars of those days after their graduation, struggling

with the meanest necessities of life by the disclosure of their woeful experience and the miserable shifts to earn a livelihood leading the life of tramps at home and adventurers abroad, where they fare no better, convinced,

That it's as good to starve 'mongst  
English swine,  
As in a forraine land to beg and  
pine."

In "Pierce Penilesse" (1592) Thomas Nash, the brilliant satirist and member of the University, utters a wail of anguish because of the wretchedness of the life of a man of letters; and Ben Jonson embittered by the woes of scholars, writes, "The time was when men were had in price for learning, now letters only make men vile."

"Better is it among fiddlers to be  
chief,  
Than at a player's trench beg relief;  
But is it not strange those mimic apes  
should prize  
Unhappy scholars at a hireling's rate.  
Vile world that lifts them up to high  
degree.  
But treads us down in grovelling mis-  
ery.  
England affords those glorious vaga-

bonds  
 That carried erst their fardels on  
 their backs  
 Coursers to ride on through the gaz-  
 ing streets  
 Scopping it in their glaring satin  
 suits  
 And pages to attend their master-  
 ships.  
 With mouthing words that better  
 wits have framed  
 They purchase lands and now es-  
 quiries are made."

The reader should not lose sight of the fact that the aim of the Cambridge dramatist is to satirize the public taste for studies of amorous passion by setting up Gullio, the lascivious boaster, the pretender to learning, who commissions his lacky to rehearse amorous speeches, mainly variations on lines in "Venus and Adonis," holding up to scorn this lustful poem as the favorite of the lewd or unchaste class of the population.

"Let this duncified world esteem of Spencer and Chaucer, I'll worship sweet Mr. Shakespeare, and to honor him will lay his Venus and Adonis under my pillow."

The Cambridge dramastist makes it plain enough that the poem "Venus and Adonis" was popular with the unchaste classes, but there is nothing from the mouth of Gullio, the braggadocio and professed libertine in the second part where the ironist is satirizing the public taste for amorous verse which reflect the individual life of the great Elizabethan Junius (Shakespeare).

Or in the latter scene of Part III of the *Return* where the Cambridge dramatist from the mouth of Kemp in mockery is conveying the opposite of what is said when Shakspeare, a strolling stage player is made a laughing stock before the Gownsmen of the University. This is made manifest when the St. John's playwright in derision represents the common players so ignorant that they think that *Metamorphosis* is a writer and that one Shakespeare (Shakspeare) of their fellowship, "puts Ben Jonson and his fellow craftsmen all down, giving "Rare Ben" a purge that made him bewray his credit."

This passage so perplexing to the upholders of the Stratford Shakespeare delusion was well understood by the St. John's audience



which was polar opposite to that now held by the Stratfordians.

Will Kemp, the jig and morris-dancer is made to exclaim "O, that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow." No wonder the common players should consider Ben Jonson a troublesome fellow, for they were still smarting from the severe chastisement he gave them in "Poetaster."

The play was brought out at the Blackfriars a month or two before by the Children of the Chapple in 1601, and in it Ben Jonson undertook their castigation, for the players had long provoked him on the stage with their taunts, and in conjunction with his other enemies, endeavored to put him down. There is still another reason why the common player should regard Ben Jonson pestiferous from their point of view, and that is his taking the part of the Children of the Chapple Royal in their conflict with the adult actors of the professional stage in the "War of the Theatres." The Children of the Chapple were very popular, due to their habit of cleanliness and histrionic success. George Chapman and Ben Jonson, writing for their stage, gave them the upper hand in the fight that put the profes-

sional players down and out of business for the popularity of the Children of the Chapple Royal drew from the common playhouse, the pleasure seeking public, who preferred them to any company of adult actors. So the professionals were compelled to close their play house, glad to turn tramps and stroll from town to town.

For be it remembered that the Lord Chamberlain's Company of which Shakspeare was a member were forced to leave London on or before this time 1601-02 "with their fardels (blankets) on their backs." By reason of having been defeated in their conflict with the Children of the Chapple, a courtier in Hamlet has made us see that the children of the Chapple have superseded the adult actors in popular esteem.

In answer to Hamlet's question, why the common players travel when it was better both for reputation and profit that they should stay in the city, Rosecrantz replies that the theatre going public were deserting the theatres in which adults held the stage, and that their itinerary has been caused by the "late innovation."

A person in "Jack Drum's Enterment" is

made to say of those who gave the Children of the Chapple audience:

"I like the audience that frequenteth there. With much applause a man shall not be chocked to the barrny jacket of a beer brewer."

But in spite of bitterness and class distinction between the academic and professional stage, "the latter was constantly being recruited from graduates who had gained their earliest dramatic experience as spectators, actors and authors of college plays."

The collection called Shakespearean usually published under the name "Shakespeare" are memorials of the University stage, and the legal inns of court, many of them worked over by the great unknown—a greater Junius, "the magical hand which has never yet been successfully imitated." The Shakespeare plays are academic (a part of them) in the sense that they were originally written in part and acted by University men within College walls, although remodelled and interpolated for the professional stage. Still exhale the academic fragrance of ancient literature and ancient philosophy, all the classic odors from the land of flowery meads and purple sky, were perceived by the great unknown, as all careful

students will perceive. For the author of the Plays and Poems is saturated with the literature of ancient Greece and Rome, and there is an ostentatious display of erudition in classical lore.

In an epistle by Thomas Nash, a gownsman of the College, to the gentlemen students of both Universities, prefixed to Robert Green's novel "Menaphon," printed in 1589, there is an allusion to the "shifty play wright who from English Seneca, if you entreat him fair in a frostie morning, he will afford you whole Hamlets, I should say handfulls of tragical speeches." We know from the title page of the first quarto of Hamlet (1603) when the play is said to have been acted in the two Universities, we also know that "Volphone" received the same distinction by the grateful acknowledgment of the author, Ben Jonson.

However, the gownsmen would scarcely recognize their work after its passage from the academic to the professional stage, so pawed over by actors and bemuddled for the "gags" of the clowns. Of this we may be sure, that so long as Hamlet retained an academic environment, its scholar hero was not made

grotesquely ridiculous as in the pathetic scene over the skull of Yorick, the gruesome relic of his playmate in childhood, or by the interpolated slang expressions contained in Hamlet's soliloquy on ending the sorrows of life in death. But we are safe in supposing that Burbage and his "men players" knew what the frequenters of the public play house wanted and did not hesitate at the employment of slang phrases and sensational tricks, or the introduction of anachronisms.

Philip Henslowe makes mention of a Hamlet presented June 9th, 1594, which was an old play (now lost), doubtless by Thomas Kyd, one of the University bred men who wrote stage plays which served for something more than as the basis for the "Shakespeare" plays. It seems certain that the "great unknown" found much that he turned to his own account in remodelling Hamlet.

The Stratford mythomantic disturbance is due to the fact that the plays were but little read or discussed in the life time of the Stratford player (Shakspeare) or a considerable time thereafter, as only about half of those contained in the folio of 1623 were in print

previous to the folio edition, and all of them surreptitiously.

When the folio of 1623 was published, the plays attributed to William Shakspeare, the Stratford player, had been written many of them for more than thirty years, having in all this time attained no considerable repute or celebrity. The Shakespeare tragedies were very seldom played at court, only one during the long reign of James the First. Twenty plays were not even printed in quarto before the folio of 1623, seven years after player Shakspeare's death. The name Shakespeare was placed on the title page by printers and publishers to mark the excess in producing studies of amorous passion, and not because of the popularity of any individual who may have borne the amorously inspired name, which derived nearly all of its commercial value in connection with the erotic poem "Venus and Adonis" of which before the end of 1630, several quarto editions had appeared.

If the Shakespeare plays had been as popular as the Poems, twenty of them would not have remained in manuscript, more especially if the author, as is alleged, was a "partner in the profits of what they call the house" for

he would not have sold them (the plays). "In the strict sense, Ben Jonson managed to retain the control of his dramas," and that too, without property interest in the play house. Why not the play actor from Stratford if the author of the plays called "Shakespeare."

The title, so called, which is now assumed, in favor of the Stratford Shakspeare was not recognizable then. The play houses were the repository of the plays, the share holding actors the custodians, and the illiterate frequenters of the public play house the critics, who never thought it worth while to discuss authorship. As for the *literati*, they would not soil their hands with such riff-raff as play books.

The Poems which were most conspicuously associated with the name Shakespeare are absent from the printed pages of the folio (1623). The syndicate of printers and publishers seems to have known nothing of the personal and literary life of the author of the plays, as the folio of 1623 contains nothing of a biographical history; not the slightest effort made to illustrate the individual life of the Stratfordian fraudulently set up by the two players Hemming and Condell, assuming, of

course, that they were not so ignorant as to mistake the actor's copy for the original manuscript, and that they did not believe that all the preceding issues, the quarto texts upon which the 1623 folio text "was founded in part were stolen and surreptitious copies maimed and deformed." While they actually reprinted in part these deformed and stolen copies and practised a fraudulent deception when they announced that all the dramas were now publish "according to the original copies."

Many writers on the subject of Shakespeare assert that the dramatist of that day did not print and publish their plays because they had sold them to the play houses—a mistaken notion. The authors could easily have secured permission from the play brokers as there was a new play coming out every eighteen days, according to Henslowe's Diary. Ben Jonson published his plays how we don't know, but the play brokers Henslowe and Burbage would (probably) have been glad to have parted with plays they called old, although of quite recent date, such as *Richard II* and the like. The reason why the great mass of dramatic literature was produced anonymously was due, in part, to the prevalence of



the common informers, termed "State decipherers," "a most lewde and detestable profession," and the authors' desire to escape bodily affliction and not because their works were irretrievable.

For the play makers could in all probability have secured permission to publish. "Many writers before there existed a reading public wore the mask of a fictitious name and were pseudonymous."

## VII.

There is another stumbling block which sends the upholders of the Stratford Shakspeare myth sprawling. We have reference to Thomas Heywood's epistle before his "Apology for Actors" which contains his publicly printed protest against the filching of two poems from his *Trioa Britannica*, which he found printed in an anthology, entitled "The Passionate Pilgrim," a collection of amorous songs, published by William Jaggard, a pirate publisher. The volume contained twenty pieces in all and but five assigned to the disguised author poet, whose mask name (Shakespeare) was on the title page until removed as the result of Heywood protest. The

bulk of the volume was by Marlow, Barnfield, Griffin, Heywood, Raleigh and various unknown authors, not one of whom, Heywood alone excepted, appear to have raised any protest, and surely "Shakespeare," the pseudonymous poet, whose poems in the main they were not, would not and did not raise any.

At the time the volume was issued in 1599, the Stratford player (Shakspeare) was alive, living in London and could not have been ignorant of the publication, had a "manifest injury" been done him. It's an unwarrantable assumption on the part of Dr. Ingleby and other writers on the subject of Shakespeare to say that Heywood's dedicatory epistle before his "Apology for Actors" is a record of protest on Shakespeare's part, a thing taken for granted without proof, Heywood writes: "So the author I know much offended with M. Jaggard that altogether unknown to him presumed to be so bold with his name." And yet the author whom Heywood claimed to have known, suffered three editions of this spurious work for twelve years to issue from the press, and says Sir Sidney Lee, "This is the only instance on record of a protest on Shakespeare's part against the many injuries which

he suffered at the hands of contemporary publishers." (p. 183). This earnest Stratfordian does not perceive the difference between proof and opinion. Shakespeare raised no protest at the fraud. Heywood merely says, "the author I know much offended," whomsoever he may have been.

But Heywood did not know even this much, for the volume is a mere compilement of amorous rhymes which had been drawn from various writers, a book without original research, an anthology, and, of course, not authored by Shakespeare, or any one of the various contributors of the material for the compilation.

Had Heywood examined the Anthology, he could not have been so blunderingly stupid as to mistake compilation for authorism, more especially if the title page bore the pseudonymous name "Shakespeare," and that notorious plunderer and pickpocket of literary property, William Jaggard.

Heywood in no way connects the play actor, Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon with Shakespeare the author poet. He also knew that the name "Shakespeare" on the title page is no proof of authorship. But as the complaining

witness, Heywood himself has shown by the detection of the fraud, actually a presumption against it; for there are as many as fifteen plays which commentators now admit that Shakespeare the author poet did not write.

This is but one of the many abortive attempts by the biographers and commentators to establish personal relationship with Shakspeare or Shakespeare and his literary contemporaries, disclosing an irrepressible desire to discover player and poet under the same hood.

There is therefore no *prima facie* reason why we should not conceive a concealed author poet, an elder Junius having a large share in the work (Shakespeare). In an age of letter writing, there is nothing in its epistolary correspondence in regard to an author poet personal to "Shakespeare;" no trace is found in its literary or social life of the individual man.

The Stratfordians much prefer to have a definite name taken to be claimant as the author of the plays and poems by all those who are against the "Stratford" as the Stratford arsenal contains no weapon for defensive warfare, and is therefore in a wretched state for defense, which the professionally trained students of literary history are unable to rem-

edy; for this reason the Stratfordians are solicitous for a definite and famous name; a claimant having a conspicuous personality, more especially a character whom they regard as vulnerable most to the darts of the criticaster, and one whose defense must necessitate the withdrawal of the enemy's fire in some degree from Stratford.

But the present writer would prefer the much lighter task of bringing forward evidence tending to prove the pseudonymity of the author. The obligation of furnishing evidence to prove who that somebody was does not lie upon those whose aim is to prove the pseudonymity and anomalousness of the works. We know that the works called "Shakespeare" and the well-known fables called *Æsopus*, although, of course, not composed by *Æsop*, as every one knows, for their modernity is clearly established, are associated with definite names, the one with that of an English actor, the other a Greek slave, whose individuality, however, is not more fabulous and mythical than is the external life of the author of the works called "Shakespeare."

It is a very easy matter to show that people of the elder time did not share our admiration

for the Shakespeare plays, and there should be some abatement of the notion that a false or fictitious name may not baffle the most determined inquiries for the Junius letters are proof against any such assumption. For notwithstanding all the discussion and excitement caused by the publication, the writer was not discovered, nor do we know positively who wrote them. For the authorship of "Junius," like the authorship of "Shakespeare" was never acknowledged either publicly or privately. The evidence for the authorship is thus wholly circumstantial, and the question remains still undecided, and one of the most noted examples of concealed authorship.

The first of the celebrated letters of Junius appeared on the 21st of January, 1769, in the Public Advertiser, one of the leading newspapers of the time and made by far the greatest sensation in the political and literary world. For lucidity and force there is nothing quite equal to them in our literature. His sentences cut and sparkled like diamonds. "King, Lords and commons are but the sport of his fury; his searching eye penetrated equally into the retired circles of domestic

life, the cabinets of ministers and the closet of the King." (Burke).

His supreme ambition has been realized in his enmities, for he had, indeed, "preserved the perishable infamy of their names and made them immortal." Sir Philip Francis has been pointed at as the "Man in the Mask" but when the letters of Junius were issuing from the press of the Public Advertiser, Edmund Burke was thought by many distinguished persons to be the writer of the letters. Now everybody knows that Burke did not write Junius.

The Franciscan theory of Junius, as it is called, is advanced by DeQuincy, Lord Macaulay, and others, although Francis was never mentioned in connection with the celebrated letters until 1814, forty-five years after the first of the far-famed letters of Junius had appeared. He (Francis) died in 1818, failing to acknowledge the identity of Junius with Francis, thence forward and forever more insuring perpetual secrecy—the immunity of dream-les dust.

But in this connection, our purpose is not to discover the author of the "Letters," but to point out one of the most conspicuous ex-

amples of concealed authorship of the Eighteenth Century. The remarkable volume entitled "Ecce Homo" is still more recent and one of the most noted of uncertified authorship. Conditions were much more favorable to the maintenance of secrecy in the literary and political world in Shakespeare's time, when perversion and deception is not only subsidiary to Tudor and Jacobin philosophy, but part and parcel of it. There could have been no great mystery about the secrecy or pseudonymity of authorship of works that were not even recognized by the Republic of Letters, nor at Court, as plays of special eminency, much less an epoch making work. There were several motives for concealed authorship during the struggle for constitutional freedom against prerogative in the turbulent reign of the Stuarts, which is one of the periods in English history when the acknowledgment of authorship meant danger. In Tudor and Jacobin times, works were published under a false name with the distinct intention to induce people to believe them the works of those whose names they bore, or of works erroneously attributed to a wrong person.

Sir Thomas Brown complained that his



name was being used to float books that he never wrote. We cannot agree with the upholders of the Stratford Shakespere myth madness who say, "That the real authorship could have been kept a secret, would be a greater mystery, more inexplicable, than the Sphinx." Nonsense.

The English speaking people are peculiarly liable to delusion or as the great American showman and hoaxer, Phineas T. Barnum says, "The people like to be fooled" and some people seem to think gullibility a blessing Whether they love fooling or not, people are fooled by delusion and fabulation, and seem to favor hoaxing and have seldom been disappointed for there has been no limit to British and American credulity, especially in the elder time when falsehood rather than truth determine the fate of mankind. When delusion, fabulation and mythomania, so affluent in the fruition of evil, had gained possession of the confidence of the people, even amongst the most progressive communities. English and American credulity is chiefly responsible for the perpetuity of the great literary hoax, associated with the Stratford player's name,

giving support to later fabrication and nebulous traditions.

The reality of witchcraft has been accepted without question. Not to believe in witchcraft in Shakespeare's time was the greatest of heresies. "Scarcely any human belief is supported by so vast a quantity of recorded testimony." Belief in that diabolical superstition was entertained by the great jurist, Sir Matthew Hale, the famous physician; Sir Thomas Browne, the celebrated Divine; Dr. Bentley, and the great English advocate, John Selden.

However, to Reginal Scot, 1538-1599, an English student and John Wier, 1515-1588, the learned Flemish physician, the modern world is indebted for the suppression of witchcraft, for that most malicious and tenacious of all primeaval superstitions, for they set the joy bells of Christendom ringing.

Myths, legends and fables have had an incalculable effect upon the activities and destiny of mankind, and in some ways, some of them a good effect. For instance, that of the mythological marksman, William Tell, whose stirring deeds were celebrated by one of the greatest poets and one of the most popular com-

posers of modern times, thus giving the legend a world-wide fame. A Swiss writer calls the William Tell story pure fable, but nevertheless proclaiming his belief in it because the legend is so popular. But it was reserved for Parson Uriel Frendenberge to show in an anonymous pamphlet (1760) that the legend of Tell had a Danish origin; the pamphlet was publicly burned by order of the Government of Uri. The legend, although localized in Uri is an old Aryan myth. But the beautiful story is a lesson of patriotism to the Swiss mountaineer, nerving his soul to avenge the wrongs of his country, the land of his fathers, the shield of his infancy, the inspiration of his children, who are to enshrine and celebrate its hallowed memories in Odes and battle hymns.

Mankind seems to have practised, from the beginning, every form of artifice and deceit. This tendency to falsehood and fabulation so characteristic of the age of Shakespeare, but not peculiar to that or any period, for mankind have been hoaxed and befooled many times before and since the age of Shakespeare. For example, the great collection known as the *Collectio Pseudo-Isidoriana* or "False De-

cretals," published in Spain about (845). These false decretals consist of about one hundred spurious documents and contain also the pretended Donation of Constantine. No suspicion attached to the Pseudo Isidore at the time of its first appearance nor for more than 500 years thereafter. "Not a whisper of doubt, not a murmur of surprise;" on the contrary, it was everywhere accepted without question. "They enjoyed an undisputed authority, an unsuspected title from their first appearance about the middle of the Ninth Century to the Fifteenth Century," when Cardinal Nicholas de Cusa disclosed their fictitious character.

The present writer's reference to the "Isidorian Decretals" is not to show that they became potent in their influence on the primitive system of Church polity for the establishment of a pure theocracy, but to call the reader's attention to an early and one of the most noted examples of concealed authorship and to the fact that the unknown writer had changed the course of human history, affecting the destinies of nations, imposing upon the credulity of mankind for more than five hundred years. And be it noted that the unknown writer of

the "Decretals," like the unknown writer of the plays and poems called "Shakespeare," did live and die without leaving in history or society a single trace of his external life, except his share in the works.

Believe or deny what you may in regard to the claim of the Stratford actor's authorship set up by the "Players," the open-minded reader knows full well that it is not on each particular fact or thing done taken separately, but on all the facts taken consecutively that the negative case must be judged.

I will now endeavor to summarize the conclusion of the subject matter which has grown under my hand month after month. In the view of those "spacious times" I have entered thoroughly into the spirit and fiber of the man—Shakspere, (whether he was or was not the author in question). "What sort of man was he?" pithily put, is the subject of my investigation.

The records do not establish the identity of the Supreme Poet, an assertion put in proof by the silence of his compeers, which is disclosed by the irrepressible negative pregnant from the ensemble of the facts such as the striking example of the silence of Cuthbert

Burbage, the brother of Richard, the famous actor. When Cuthbert petitioned the Earl of Pembroke in 1635, then Lord Chamberlain, in the matter about certain theatres,—“To ourselves,” he says, “we joined those deserving men, Shakespeare, Hemings, Condall, Philips and other partners, in the profits of that they call the House,” and he adds, “that when he and his brother took possession of Blackfriars in 1609, they placed in it man players, which were Heming, Condall, Shakspeare, etc.”

In this address to the Lord Chamberlain came Cuthbert Burbage's opportunity to advantage his associates and himself, as a business man and proprietor of the play houses. To remind the Earl of the fact—if fact it was—that “our fellow Shakspere,” “a man player,” and a “deserving man,” had been a man of unsurpassed intelligence, whose works are the highest creations of genius, whose praise Ben Jonson in a panegyrical poem (1623), blew into the trumpet of fame. But in his memorial to Lord Pembroke, the householder of the Globe Theatre did not resound Shakspere's praise, but, instead, the reputed author twelve years after the publication of the Great Folio, is described to his Lordship

as merely a "man player and a deserving man," and nothing more.

The affirmative assertions, prefixed to the Folio editions, published in 1623, and signed by the players, "John Heminge" and "Henrie Condall," cannot outweigh the negative evidence of Cuthbert Burbage from silence in 1635; for in our grasp of the situation if Shakspeare is "Shakespeare," Cuthbert's silence is perfectly astonishing.

The play houses were in need of all the support the mighty genius that glorious name Shakespeare could give. This fact is made manifest for in "The Actor's Remonstrance" (1643), is contained the tarnishing evidence of the admission of the abuse of the players' vocation, and should be read when we are disposed to be severe upon our Puritan ancestors for their dislike of the common players. Why speak of the most intellectual of the human race, the wonder of mankind, in the same terms as of the other actors "when their social position was of the lowest." Would not Cuthbert have been eager to say in his petition to Lord Pembroke: We are called "the basest trade," vagabonds, under the Act, Eliz. xxxlx? Nevertheless, our fellow Shakspeare was the

author of the Plays contained in the Great Folio edition, published in 1623. Is it conceivable that Cuthbert Burbage, if he positively knew the immortal Plays were written by the Stratford Player, that he would not have found tongue to say on this occasion, "with cackle and clatter," match him if you can. Why classed simply with a batch of players if Shakspeare was "Shakespeare?"

Was it not because he (Cuthbert) was aware that the Lord Chamberlain knew very well that none of the men players named in the petition,—Hemings, Candall, Philips, Shakspeare, etc.—had any profession but that of actor? That Shakspeare was a professional actor we know, but the inference from Cuthbert's silence is, that Shakespeare was not a literary gentleman and dramatist. By the owner of the play houses, Shakspeare is placed on the same footing as the other players, and Cuthbert Burbage did not, in telling the history of the play houses, give Lord Pembroke, the survivor of the "incomparable pair of brethren," to whom the Folio was dedicated, the slightest intimation that Shakspeare, a "man player," had ever been a dramatic au-



thor, when the drama formed so important a part of the literature of England.

The silence of Philip Henslowe is also very good proof of anonymity in authorship. The old householder's silence is due to the fact that the Plays were not of certified authorship—bearing no name.

Not until the fourth edition did the name "Shakespeare" appear upon the title page of "Romeo and Juliet." It is plain, to say the least, that the anonymous aspect predominates in the dramatic literature of the period, but the reticence of the author of the Works now called "Shakespeare," was in this regard, peculiar among his contemporaries.

Inasmuch as the same titles or names of so many plays found recorded in Henslowe's Diary are identical with those of the Heminge and Condall list in the Great Folio, they are the strongest testimonials we have that this author began his dramatic career by writing plays for Henslowe as an anonymous writer, and in all probability continued to write under his pseudonym "Shakespeare" to the end of his dramatic career.

During the twelve years beginning in February, 1591, Henslowe's Diary records the

titles of no fewer than 270 pieces or plays—a new play about every eighteen days. However, it would seem that Henslowe and Alleyn at the Rose Theatre had knowledge of the “Works,” for the Diary or notebook of the old manager, and the wardrobe of the famous actor, Edward Alleyn, attest. But of the author, “Shakespeare,” they knew nothing—absolutely nothing, about him—the Shakespearian drama, and no shadow of a real name.

Dr. Furness, expressing his disappointment, says: “Where the names of nearly all the dramatic poets of the age are to be frequently found we might certainly count on finding that of Shakespeare, but the shadows in which Shakespeare’s early life was spent, envelop him here too, and his name, as Collier says, is not met with in any part of the manuscript.”

That Shakspeare of Stratford had lived a literary life, whether early or late, and was enveloped by shadows has no foundation in recorded fact.

The negative evidence from the silence of Philip Henslowe, I repeat, does prove that the early plays called “Shakespeare,” bearing no name, were of unknown authorship, the works of a reticent writer—“The Great Unknown.”

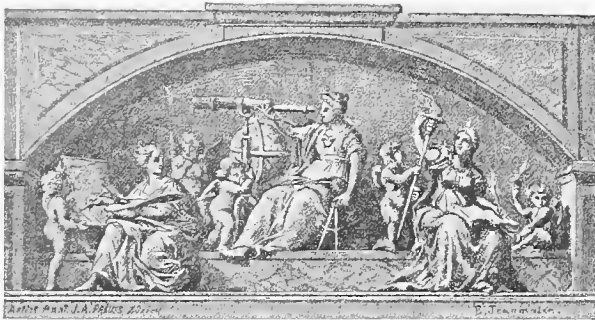
Silence in the matter of authorship is the course of "a concealed poet."

The silence of Henslowe and Alleyn, householders of the Rose Theatre early in Shakspeare's career, coupled with the silence of the Burbages, householders of the Globe Theatre, does evidence anonymity in authorship.

The silence of John Manningham, barrister-at-law of the Middle Temple, is still another instance of the negative pregnant, who under date of February 2, 1601, records the story in his Diary criminating Shakspeare's morals, but who is not personally remembered as a man of letters, a writer of plays, no hint of the undivided personality of player and author.

Their never-ceasing silence and the author's never-ceasing reticence is a fatal breach in the claim set up for the player—one William Shakspeare of Stratford—to the personal authorship of the Plays called by his name.





One comfort is that great men taken up in any way are profitable company. We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man without gaining something by it. He is the living fountain of life, which it is pleasant to be near. On any terms whatsoever you will not grudge to wander in his neighborhood for a while. *Heroes and Hero-Worship.*



## **PART IV**

**SHAKESPEARE THE MASTER-MIND  
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF SEV-  
ERAL ELIZABETHAN AUTHORS**







*Hic ego originis feci.  
Ben. J. J. J.*



## HYMN TO CYNTHIA

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,  
Now the sun is laid to sleep,  
Seated in thy silver chair,  
State in wonted manner keep:  
    Hesperus entreats thy light,  
    Goddess, excellently bright.  
Earth, let not thy envious shade  
Dare itself to interpose;  
Cynthia's shining orb was made  
Heav'n to clear, when ~~day~~ did close:  
    Bless us, then, with wished sight,  
    Goddess, excellency bright.  
Lay thy bow of pearl apart,  
And thy crystal shining quiver;  
Give unto the flying hart  
Space to breathe, how short soever:  
    Thou that mak'st a day of night,  
    Goddess, excellently bright.

*Ben Jonson.*



BEN JONSON AND SHAKESPEARE

VIII.

**"THE** Mermaid" — "the Apollo" — the Club room of "the Devil"—is here imaged before us.

"Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy Cavern  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?"

The great men were there,—Raleigh and Spencer, Drayton and Camden, Chapman and Shirley, Selden and Field, Webster and Howell, Hobbes and Ford, Fletcher and the lion-in-chief,—"Rare Ben."

—"I lye and dreamed of your full Mermaid Wine," Francis Beaumont—writing from the country to Ben Jonson:

"What things have we seen  
Done at the Mermaid: heard words  
that have been  
So nimble and so full of subtle flame,  
As if that every one from whence  
they came

Had meant to put his whole wit in a  
 jest,  
 And had resolved to live a fool the  
 rest  
 Of his dull life."

In those stirring times—rare times they were of indomitable energy. With such men for his contemporaries Ben Jonson was yet a power in their day, and in the age in which we live no mocking vision, but standing forth in sharpest outline after the literary records and personal history of even the greatest have faded.

This remarkable man, like his namesake of a later generation, was coarsely framed as his own verse tells us: "His mountain-belly and his rocky face," seamed with scars of disease; combative and prone to strange imaginations and peculiar manifestations; his vast influence on his own generation; the superiority of reputation—great as a writer in prose as well as in verse; the deference shown the leader of this great literary club. No wonder Ben is exacting that full homage which he believed should be shown him, the acknowledged literary monarch of his day and generation.

Nevertheless, Ben Jonson is not one of the

writers of those times whose works are the studies of the aftertime, notwithstanding Ben is more intimately known to posterity than any of the brotherhood of poets contemporaneous with him. Judged by the standard of contemporaneous work Chapman's "Homer" had won a more enduring fame. In imagination I can see him walking up and down in the club room, his hands thrust into the two lateral pockets of an old coachman's coat, inflamed by strong drink and the recrimination of Dekker and Marston. Ben never would let "sleeping dogs rest."

However, Ben Jonson would have been more thoroughly known to posterity had there been a Boswell at his elbow to report the Table-Talk. A similarity of conduct may be traced in Ben and his equally famous namesake, the Lexicographer, but asking questions was not then all the rage. In fact, the only chronic interviewer in Ben Jonson's day was the Scotch poet, Drummond of Hawthornden, who lived in a handsome home set above the charming valley of Eskdale, far from the Mermaid Tavern. But then there was James Howell who lived in London, an inveterate note taker and letter writer, who was usually

on the scent for suppers at the Apollo, and could have reported Ben's table talk but unfortunately did not. In a letter dated from Westminster, April 5, 1636, James Howell describes a solemn supper given by Ben Jonson, at which he and Thomas Carew were present. This letter to Thomas Hawkins is evidence of the fact that Ben's utterances were veraciously reported by the Scotch poet in his notes, "Conversations of Ben Jonson in 1619," where reference is made to Ben's display of self-worship and vilification of his brother poets, and also of the truth and justice of the criticism as resting on Ben's competency and credibility as a witness.

Howell writes: "I was invited yesternight to a solemn supper by B. J. whom you deeply remember. There was good company excellent Cheer Choise wines and jovial welcome One thing intervened which almost Spoiled the relish of the rest Ben began to engross all the discourse to Vapour extremely of himself and by vilifying others to magnify his own muse Thomas Carew buzzed me in the ear that Ben had barreled up a great deal of Knowledge yet seeme he had not read the 'Etheques' which among other precepts of



morality forbid Self-commendation But for my part I am content to dispense with this Roman infirmity of B's now that time has snowed upon his pericranium."

However, we know Ben pretty much as he was known to the men of his own generation. The remarkable record of his sayings, reported by William Drummond, the Laird of Hawthornden, in 1619, when honored with a visit from the great literary dictator of the time,—“great lover and praiser of himself, contemner and scorner of others.”

The Drummond notes show Ben Jonson to be a person of rather doubtful veracity, one whose testimony we view with suspicion or reject altogether. And this is the witness whom the Stratfordians chiefly depend upon as the attestor for the works which are associated with the Stratford actor's name. The Stratfordians say—or one of them, a sylogizer, has said—if Shakspere of Stratford was not the true author of the works of Shakespeare, then Jonson was a liar. Jonson could not have been a liar. Therefore, etc., the critics cannot perceive the difference between proof and opinion. By the way, the opinion of the most skilful critics is, that the great unknown writer

(Junius), who for a hundred and fifty years has been the subject of the closest scrutiny, cannot be identified "*Stat nominis umbra.*"

Edmund Burke was generally supposed to be Junius while the letters were issuing from the press. Dr. Kelly of Finsbury Square, published a tract in order to prove that Burke was the author of Junius. So may we not as glibly syllogize also without any real knowledge of the identity of Junius. Thus, if Burke was not the true author of the Junius letters then Dr. Kelly was a liar. Dr. Kelly could not have been a liar. Therefore, etc.

However, we now know that Burke did not write the celebrated letters. Junius is *now* classed under a pseudonym. Lies framed unconsciously do not criminate the utterer of them.

The present writer having read all Ben Jonson's hyperbolic utterances in prose, all Ben's panegyrics in verse, and the whole of his conversations with Drummond, is convinced that Ben is unreliable and is therefore not competent to confirm by his testimony the Stratfordian authorship (so-called). Persons who are unable to tell the truth, even when there is no reason for falsification, are, in the

parlance of alienists, termed "mythomaniacs," "which in the adult is always the indication of a diseased condition, or at least of a certain amount of mental disturbance." The study of mythomania and of its various stages, shows us how untrustworthy Ben Jonson's testimony is. Mythomania in Ben usually takes the form of vain-glorious boasting or of self-glorification. But as the Drummond notes attest, Ben's mythomaniac activity appears in accusation of brother-poets as calumny—detraction—vilification and defamation, framed unconsciously, not wilful or perverse falsehood. Ben Jonson is also overflowing and hearty in his commendation, shown in his readiness to congratulate and of excess in sympathy. But Ben's compliments are to be regarded with suspicion; in their converse lie more nearly the true state of his mind, "especially after drink which is one of the elements in which he liveth."

Dr. Samuel Johnson's thoughts in reference to wine bibbing are not opprobrious to his bibacious name-sake, at least not intentionally so. "The maxim *in vino veritas*, a man who is well warmed with wine will speak truth—may be an argument for drinking if you suppose

men in general to be liars Sir I would not keep company with a fellow who lies as long as he is sober and whom you must make drunk before you can get a word of truth out of him."

However, Ben Jonson was well received at Hawthornden. On his approach Drummond shouts: "Welcome, welcome, royal Ben!" to which he immediately replied: "Thank ye, thank ye, Hawthornden." Knowing what Ben was he must have had a Bacchic time, assuming, of course, that he brought his Tavern habits with him and that Scotchmen, like Kentuckians, take their whiskey straight. The sort which inspired Ben, according to one of Ben's "Sons" at the "Devil." With some alteration we read:

How could the conversations  
                   heat and vigour lack,  
 When each sentence cost his host  
                   a cup of sack?

Ben Jonson sojourned with Drummond about three weeks. He bade him a most affectionate farewell, but forthwith wrote,—  
 "Oppressed with phantasy which hath ever mastered his (Jonson's) reason a general disease in many poets."

Ben Jonson's panegyric verse and carping utterances in the opinion of the stalwart champions of conventional errors, lies the cogency of the "Stratfordian" case, and assert that "Rare Ben" is the Colossus of their faith.

We will now endeavor to concentrate the interest of the reader chiefly in the attestation of Ben Jonson for the works which are associated with the name of "Shakespeare." It is not pretended that the play actor, William Shakspeare made any claim to the works called "Shakespeare" but is taken to be claimant by some persons, who in the fullness of their desire to sustain a fictitious character, have recourse to fictitious biography, well stocked with fanciful "maybes" and "might-have-beens" and "could-have-beens" and "must-have-beens" and the conventional nonsense usually appropriated to a life of "Shakespeare."

Ben Jonson was born in Westminster, England, in 1572 or 1573 and was the son of a clergyman. Regardless of poverty, he was educated at Westminster School. William Camden, antiquary and historian, was his instructor and benefactor "most reverend head." Ben seems not to have gone to either university, notwithstanding he later received degrees

from Oxford and Cambridge. He served as a soldier in Flanders, where he distinguished himself by killing one of the enemy in single combat, but had a narrow escape in 1598 from the gallows for killing an actor in a duel, one Gabriel Spencer belonging to Henslowe's company.

John Aubrey of scandalmongery fame in whose brain everything is confusion, in recording the event, says, he (Ben Jonson) killed "Mr. Marlowe, the poet, on Bunhill, coming from the Green Curtain playhouse;" but the fact is, Marlowe, "whose memory Jonson held in high esteem, met his untimely death in 1593 in a tavern quarrel at Deptford, five years before this period. Marlowe was slain by Francis Archer, a serving man. So Aubrey has muddled the whole affair as usual.

Writers on the subject of Jonson and Shakespeare say that we have abundant tradition of their close friendship. There are no credible traditions of their close friendship. The manufactured traditions so conspicuous in books called "A Life of William Shakespeare" are the dreams of fancy, fraud and fiction.

Notwithstanding it was the custom amongst literary men of the day to belaud their friends

in verse or prose Shakespeare in the lifetime of the Stratford player, was honored with no mark of Ben Jonson's admiration or friendship. Not a single line of commendatory verse was addressed to "Shakespeare" by Jonson, although so lavishly bestowed as to include almost every notable in literature and public life. In fact, what shrimp was there among hack writers who could not gain a panegyric from his generous tongue?

The proven facts of the Stratford player's (Shakspeare) life are facts unassociated with authorcraft; facts that prove the isolation and divorcement of player and poet. The proven facts of Ben Jonson's life are facts interlacing man and poet. Almost every incident in his life reveal his personal affection or bitter dislike for his fellow poets; always ready for a quarrel, arrogant, conceited, boastful and vulgar. There is much truth in Dekker's charge: "'Tis thy fashion to flirt ink in every man's face and then crawl into his bosom. Jonson maintained that he had liberty and license to commend himself and abuse his comrades, but if they commended themselves, this was inflation, or if they abused him, this was detraction."

Nevertheless, there was community of friendship always. He was federated in a comedy "Eastward Ho" with Chapman and Marston, and was sent to prison with Chapman. (Marston, the real offender, beat a retreat), on complaint of Sir James Murray, a northern carpet bagger of Scottish birth, newly knighted. The satire on the needy Scots is contained in the words "Who indeed are dispersed over the face of the earth"—and the wish that a hundred thousand of them were in Virginia, where "we should find ten times more comfort of them there than we doe here."

Ben Jonson's letter relating to the misfortunes of the poets in the matter of *Eastward Hoe*:

Excellentest of Ladies (Countess of Rutland).

And most honard of the Graces, Muses, and me; if it be not a sinn to profane your free hand with prison polluted paper, I wolde entreate some little of youre ayde to the defence of my innocence which is as clean as this leaf was (before I stained it) of anything halfe-worthye of this violent infliction. I am commytted and with me a worthy Friend one



Mr. (George) Chapman, a man I cannot say how known to your Ladishipp but I am sure known to me to honor you: and *Our offence a Play* so mistaken so misconstrued, as I do wonder whether this ignorance or impudence be most, who are our adversaries. It is now not disputable for we stand on uneven basis, and am course so unequally carried, as we are without examining, without hearing, or without any prooffe but malicious Rumor, horried to bondage and fetters; The cause we understand to be the King's indignation for which we are hartelye sorie, and the more by how much the less we have deserv'd it. What our Sute is, the worthy employd Soliciter and equall Adores of your Vertues can best inform you.

BEN JONSON

After their release, unharmed, Ben Jonson "banqueted all his friends" among them Camden and Selden, also Ben's old Spartan mother, who it seems credited the report that her famous son was in imminent danger of having his nostrils slit or at least his ears lopped; "drank to him and shew him a paper which she had (if the sentence had taken execution) to have mixed in the prison among his drink, which was full of lustic strong poison, and

that she was no churle, she told she minded to have drunk of it herself."

Ben Jonson's personality and literary work are inseparable. Drunk or sober, few have served learning with so much pertinacity, and fewer still have so successfully challenged admiration even from literary rivals, with whom at times he was most bitterly hostile, and at other times indisputably open-handed and jovial.

Ben Jonson had a literary environment always, for there is perfect interlacement of man and craft. He became one of the most prolific writers of his age, occupying among the lettered men of his day a position of literary supremacy.

His was a commanding personality, affiliated into courtly and public life. In the forty years of his literary career, he collected a library so extensive that Gifford doubted whether any library "in England was so rich in scarce and valuable books."

From the pages of Isaac Disraeli, we read "No poet has left behind him so many testimonials of personal fondness by inscriptions and addresses in the copies of his works which he presented to his friends."

Notwithstanding the depletion of his collection of books by forced sales, and the burning of his library between the years 1621-22 which also prove that poverty stricken Jonson had books and manuscripts to burn while the rich William Shakspeare of Stratford is not known to have had anything of a literary description to burn, give away or bequeath.

But strange as it must seem to the votaries of "Shakespeare" not a single copy of Jonson's works or testimonials is brought forward to bear witness to his personal regard and admiration, for Shakespeare before the Stratford player's death in 1616; and we may add that there is no testimonial by Shakespeare of his regard and personal fondness for Ben Jonson, although many of the literary antiquarians have unearthed in their researches, facts and discoveries which they have brought forward as new particulars of the life of William Shakspeare, the Stratford player. This, if not incompatible with authorship is surely divorcing Shakspeare the actor from "Shakespeare" the author of the plays. They but deepen the mystery that surrounds the personality of the author, "The shadow of a mighty name."

But at the same time they disclose the true

character of Shakspeare the actor, match maker, land owner, money lender and litigant, which is affirmative of John Bright's opinion, that "any man who believes that William Shakspeare of Stratford wrote Hamlet or Lear is a fool." The words of the great orator are not emulative of the highest civility, but instead the controversial "sweetmeats" such as liar, loony, and of the like kind of honey-toned names of endearment then in vogue.

The student reader will perceive that Jonson's verse does not agree with his prose and that his "Ode to Shakespeare" which Dryden called "an insolent, sparing and invidious panegyric" was not the final word of comment, which is contained in Ben Jonson's "Discoveries" (manuscript book) a prose reference in disparagement of the man whom he may have believed was identifiable with the playwright. We believe he was mistaken in so believing.

When Ben is least variable and most constant as in the three references to Shakespeare, to Drummond of Hawthornden in 1619, in 1623 in Commendatory verses to the folio; in his manuscript book "Discoveries" from 1630-1635, he seems to have had no information in

the subject as by observance, by reading, by study or in conversation with lettered persons about the author of the plays "Shakespeare."

An overweening admiration and supreme regard for self made Ben an easy victim of dupery or gullery. Was he hoaxed by the players? Ben Jonson was vulnerable most in his character as a witness. The reader will therefore be indulgent if we make some remark upon the credibility and competency of this witness. The elder writers on the subject of Jonson and Shakespeare before Gifford's time (1757-1826) were always harping on Ben Jonson's envy and jealousy of Shakespeare.

Since Gifford's day the antiquary has been abroad in the land without having discovered anything of a literary life of the play actor, Shakspeare, and as if by general consent, all recent writers on the subject regard Ben Jonson's attestation or his metrical tribute "To the memory of my beloved, the author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us," as an essential element in his biography—the title deed of authorship. Having made him their star witness we should hear no more of Jonson's jealousy and envy of Shakespeare.

However, Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. J. M. Robertson follow the elder writers, whose pace was set by Ben Jonson's caveling words, "And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek," are harping still upon Ben's jealous rage, for whenever the statements of Ben Jonson upon whom the Stratfordians chiefly reply are not suitable to their belief in the Stratford delusion, he is to be discredited, and therefore Ben is straightway denounced as an angry rival actuated by jealous spite.

But remembering Ben Jonson's metrical panegyrics in the folio of 1623 which he wrote for the syndicate of publishers—straws, which like drowning men they frantically catch at, which they imagine will buoy up. The upholders of the Stratford delusion will surely cling to Ben, for they say he never varies from his identification of Shakspere the Stratford player with "Shakespeare" the author of the plays. Now we take all this for granted. What then are we constrained by this opinion from the settled belief that the moody Ben was deceived or mistaken?

Abraham Lincoln says, "You can fool all the people some of the time," and Ben seems to have been among the number fooled, "and

some of the people" (Stratfordians) "all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time."

Now we think that Ben Jonson really did not know enough about "Shakespeare" he having no settled judgment in regard to any point, mere deduction drawn from hearsay, tattle of gossiping players, themselves befooled as is disclosed by his conversations with Drummond of Hawthorndon in 1619, when he said that "Shakespeare" "Wanted art" and also in his posthumously published Discoveries he writes "Many times he (Shakespeare) fell into those things, could not escape laughter, as when he said in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him, Caesar thou dost me wrong, he replied Caesar did never wrong but with just cause, which was ridiculous."

Again in 1623 in commendatory verses to the folio which he wrote for the syndicate of printers and publishers with an eye to the sale of the book and, of course, will not repeat what he said to Drummond in 1619, that Shakespeare lacked art, and so Ben in his hyperbolical poem gave Shakespeare plenty of it "well turned and true filled lines." But in cold, passionless prose at a later date, he is to

express the wish "would he had blotted out a thousand (lines)."

King George III gave concurrence to this opinion for His Majesty tells us that "a great deal of Shakespeare is sad stuff, only one must not say so." His Majesty, it seems, was not aware that the work of "Shakespeare" had been interpolated by wanton players and botched by collaborating authors, and that the work of others had been appropriated by Shakespeare. So then these intruders coupled with the older authors' inferior hand is held responsible for all of the "sad stuff" contained in the thousand lines referred to according to Shakespearean commentators.

Mr. James R. Lowell in an address on Shakespeare's 'Richard III' which contained his doubts about the authorship of the drama, the result of his examination indicated that at least two different hands had been engaged in the making of 'Richard III,' a play he said, which "Shakespeare" adapted to the stage, and proceeds to assign all the "sad stuff" as unblotted lines, lack of art to the older author, whoever he was, for said he "I believe it absolutely safe to say of Shakespeare that he never wrote deliberate nonsense."



Ben Jonson in his remarks "Of Shakespeare, our fellow country-man" and his commendation by the actors wrote, "I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakespeare that (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been 'Would he had blotted a thousand' which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance who choose that circumstance to commend their friend by (that) wherein he most faulted."

We know that this statement by the players "that in his writings (whatsoever he penned) he, Shakespeare, never blotted a line," is moonshine and proves that the players had not access to the author's manuscript—his original draft; what they received were merely fair copies in the handwriting of their yoke-fellow, Will Shakspeare, play house copyist or transcriber, thus befooling the players with his gullish waggery.

However, Ben Jonson could not have foreseen that Shakespeare's self-constituted literary executors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would have blotted out not only a thousand lines but many thousands, and would

decree that only the best part of his reputed works should come down to the latest ages.

In the early years of the seventeenth century the name "Shakespeare" was shadowy, the plays variable. No one laid any claim to them on their first appearance, but in a subsequent time by the mere fiction of a name, an actor (a vagabond under the Act) is taken to be claimant. "Shakespeare" in Ben Jonson's day held a title page proprietorship in as many as sixty-four plays and Ben did not know (doubtless) they were not wholly his own.

"The Yorkshire Tragedy" to give as an instance, was in Ben Jonson's earlier years as well authenticated as was "Hamlet," "The Puritan," as was "Lear."

The same is true of the unlisted plays which we now call "the doubtful plays" contained in the third folio edition of the Shakespeare plays in 1663-4. William Shakspeare the Stratford player never used the hyphen Shak-Spere or an E in the first syllable of his name or an A in the last. Now as every one knows the only specimens of his handwriting that we possess are the six signatures. In none of them does the Stratford player recognize the liter-

ary form of the name Shake-Speare and Shakespeare. So far as any one knows his yoke fellows never spelled their names on this wise: Burb—age. Con—dell.

We find that the plays were issuing from the press anonymously; for example, the old edition of "Romeo and Juliet" do not bear the name "Shakespeare" until after 1609, and then in a way which strongly suggests its use as a pseudonym for the name is hyphenated thus, Shake-Speare on the title page. The copy in the British Museum is without Shake-Spere's name. It is found only in early copies of the edition, having been suppressed before the rest were printed. According to Halliwell-Phillipps the name "Shake-Speare" was so spelled on the title page of the earliest known edition of "Hamlet" also in the 1609 edition of "The Sonnets."

The early and frequent appearance of a signature on the title page with a hyphen would be understood doubtless at once as a pseudonym, work thus produced under an assumed or fictitious name, for real genuine names were not spelled with a hyphen. But Shake-Speare a mask name often was so spelled, but so far as anybody knows, not one of the family

of dramatic poets was a hyphen used in spelling his name. Who ever saw the like of this? Mar-lowe, Dray-ton, Jon-son and Web-ster. The word "Shakespeare" has been gradually formed during successive generations and rendered venerable by the act of adoration.

But an ultimate reflection will make clear how little Ben Jonson is to be depended upon as attesting the liability of the Stratford player, for the works which were affiliated with his name seven years after his death. There is not a word or sentence in all Jonson's writings which bear witness to Shakespeare as a writer of plays or poems anterior to the Stratford player's death in 1616, as all reference to Shakespeare in Jonson's verse and prose are posterior to this event.

"Notes of Ben Jonson's conversations" recorded by William Drummond of Hawthorn-den are of great literary and historical value and are important also as bearing on Ben Jonson's competency and credibleness as a witness. The Drummond notes were first printed by Mr. David Lang, who discovered them among the manuscripts of Sir Robert Sibbald, a well known antiquary. "Conversations" as we have it on the evidence of Drummond is in

accord with almost every contemporary reference to Jonson and internally they chime with Ben's own manuscript book "Discoveries."

There should be no controversy in regard to the justice of the Scottish poets' criticism as recorded by Drummond, we learn "He (Ben Jonson) is a great lover and praiser of himself, a condemner and scorner of others, especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he liveth."

The conversation noted by Drummond took place when Jonson visited him at Hawthornden in 1618-19 and disclose the fact that "Rare Ben" was a vulgar, boastful, tipsy backbiter who blackguarded many of his fellow-poets.

Conversations in part from the notes recorded by William Drummond, Laird of Hawthorndon.

"He, Ben Jonson, is passionately kind and angry, careless either to gain or keep vindictive, but if he be well answered at himself interprets best sayings and deeds often to the worst; a dissembler of the parts which reign in him, a bragger of some good that he wanted, thinketh nothing well done but what either he himself or some of his friends have

said or done. He was for any religion as being versed in both."

"His (Ben Jonson) censure of the English poets was this: That Sidney did not keep a decorum in making every one speak as well as himself; Spencer's stanza pleased him not nor his matter. Samuel Daniel was a good honest man, had no children, and was no poet and that he had wrote the "Civil Wars" and yet had not one battle in all his book and was jealous of him.

That Michael Drayton's verses pleased him not. Drayton feared him and he esteemed not of him that Donne "Anniversary" was profane and full of blasphemies . . . that Donne for not keeping to accent deserved hanging.

Day Dekker and Minshew were all rogues; that Abram Francis in his English hexameters was a fool. He said Shakespeare wanted art, in one of his plays he brought in a number of men, saying they had suffered shipwreck in Bohemia where there is no sea near by a hundred miles.

That Sir Walter Raleigh esteemed more fame than conscience. The best wits in England were employed in making his history; he

himself had written a piece to him of the Punick War which he atlered and set in his book.

That Chapman and Fletcher were loved of him. Sir Henry Watton's verses of a "Happy Life" he hath by heart and a piece of Chapman's Translation of Homer's Iliad (Book XIII). That next to himself only Fletcher and Chapman could make a masque. He esteemeth John Donne the first poet in the world in some things; that Donne himself for not being understood would perish.

That Francis Beaumont loved too much himself and his own verse.

He had many quarrels with Marston, that Gervase Markham was not of the number of the faithful, and but a base fellow; that such were Day and Middleton; Spencer died for lack of bread in King Street.

That the King said Sir Philip Sidney was no poet, neither did he see any verses in England to the scullers."

According to Ben Jonson, His Sacred Majesty, James the First, did not enjoy the beauties of Sir Philip Sydney, contained in his "Flowers of Poetry," but was diverted with the "Scullers" (John Taylor, 1580-

1654, water poeticule) which title he owes to his occupation on the river. So it was not "Shakespeare" "that so did take Eliza and our James" but instead a mere rhymester.

However, Sir William Alexander (1567-1640) later Earl of Stirling, grumbled that James I prefers his own (poetic work) to all else.

But, continues William Drummond, "the Father of interviewers," "sundry times he (Jonson) hath devoured his books, sold them all for necessity. Of all his plays he never gained 200 pounds; that the half of his comedies were not in print. He dissuaded me (Drummond) from poetry, for that she had beggared him, when he might have been a rich lawyer, physician or merchant."

"An Epigram" on the "Court Pucelle" was stolen out of his pocket by a gentleman who drank him drowsy. He had many quarrels with Marston, beat him and took his pistol from him. He said to Prince Charles of Inigo Jones that when he wanted words to express the greatest villian in the world, he would call him "Inigo." Jones having accused him for naming him behind his back a fool. He denied it, but says he: I said he



was an arrant knave, and I avouch it. This is the Ben who was trying to brow beat and bully the British architect, who first introduced movable scenery and decorations for the masque entertainments at Court. They were not in use at the public playhouses at any time during the reign of Queen Elizabeth and King James the First.

How very unfortunate in his temper Ben Jonson must have been to war against his own bread and butter. When these bitter words were spoken, the great architect had personal connection with almost every distinguished person in literary and public life and had sufficient influence to deprive him of employment at Court. Ben could have followed the example set by his dearest friend, George Chapman, who seems to have found it possible to live permanently at peace with Inigo Jones under a similar connection (masque-writer) by acceding to the stage architect's desire of prefixing his own name before that of the poet on the title page.

The great artificer showed extraordinary industry and skill in contriving the architectural decorations, and therefore thought himself the "biggest toad in the puddle." So on

the title-page of "The Mask of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn" as it was performed before James VI and I at Whitehall, February 15th, 1613, at the celebration of the royal nuptial of the Elector Platine, called the "Winter King" and Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, we read "Invented and fashioned by our kingdomes most artful and ingenious architect Inigo Jones. Supplied, applied, digested and written by George Chapman."

But "Rare Ben" would not yield his right to first place on the title-page. So two great men were actually quarrelling about a trivial matter. However, Jones seems to have had no acquaintance with "Shakespeare" the author of the plays whose mask was impenetrable.

The reader is not unmindful that the language of Ben Jonson is sometimes grossly approbrious, sometimes basely adulatory, while his laudatory verses on Beaumont, Drayton, Silvester, "Shakespeare" and other contemporary writers are in striking contrast to the discrepancy of testimony disclosed by his prose works and conversations.

In the memorial verses Jonson tells us that the Shakespearian plays were "such that

neither man nor muse could praise too much." The strictest scrutiny, however, into the life and works of Ben Jonson fails to denote his actual acquaintance with the works of "the greatest genius of our world." What becomes of his enthusiastic eulogy of Shakespeare when "From my house in the Black-Friars this 11th day of February, 1607," Ben Jonson writes his dedication—"Volpone." "To the most noble and most equal sisters, the two famous Universities" which should have disclosed his close friendship and admiration for Shakespeare for the great dramatist was then at the zenith of his power.

The dedication of it (Volpone) and himself was written nine years before the death of William Shakspeare the player, when Jonson declared, "I shall raise the despised head of poetry again and stripping her out of those rotten and base rags wherewith the times have adulterated her form."

It should be remembered that at the time of this sweeping condemnation of what he terms dramatic or stage poetry, two-thirds of the "Shakespearean" plays were then written. All of the greatest, "Hamlet," "Macbeth," "Othello," "Lear," "Julius Ceasar," "Mer-

chant of Venice," "Romeo and Juliet" and not less than twenty other Shakespearean plays were in Jonson's estimation in 1607, "rotten and base rags," while in 1623, sixteen years after date in the verses prefixed to the first folio edition published in 1623 for the syndicate of printers, Jonson tells us that their author was "soul of the age."

In view of Ben Jonson's tardy apostrophe to "Shakespeare," it is inconceivable that he could have known the Stratford player as the author of "Hamlet," "Lear" and "Othello" and not have extolled him in commendatory verse living and in death sighing mournful requiem to his name.

Ben Jonson knew, doubtless, William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon as a share holding actor of no considerable repute who with other share holding actors purchased and mounted plays written by other men, also as a money lender, a very convenient man in time of need, doubtless though the needy Ben who had holes in his pockets. Therefore "of Shakespeare our fellow countryman," he says, "I loved the man and do honour his memory on this side idolatry as much as any." Personal and not literary appreciation.

Keep in mind that Ben Jonson's celebrated note on Shakespeare was penned after his poetical eulogy and shows that Ben did not esteem Shakespeare very much. The cause of the upholders of the Stratford delusion must be desperate when they feel constrained to discredit their own witness, Ben Jonson, upon whose testimony the Shakspeare delusion chiefly rests.

Ben, they say, "on occasion spoke with two voices," one in which he bristles with spite and envy against Shakespeare and then again he sounds a note of highest praise. Thus the Stratfordians discredit their own witness by impugning his general character for veracity, showing that "on occasion" he had made conflicting statements.

To give as an instance, Ben Jonson's two conflicting statements that Spencer "died for want of bread" and that he refused Essex gift of twenty pieces, saying he had no time to spend them. However, Essex bore the cost of Spencer's interment.

Now that Ben Jonson, as a witness having been discredited by the party introducing him, why is his evidence not ruled out?

Ben Jonson's egotism would, of course, pre-

clude a just judgment of the work of his fellow poets. He felt that his own writings were immeasurably superior. Did Ben ever read the Shakespeare plays?

For the affirmative of the proposition there is not the faintest presumption of probable evidence. Jonson often became the generous panegyrist of poets, whose writing in all probability he never had read.

The Ode "To the Memory of my Beloved Master William Shakespeare and what he hath left us," is in Ben Jonson's hyperbolical style of adulation and he writes with an eye to the sale of the first folio edition (1623) by the syndicate of printers and publishers. Giving send offs was the recreation and the delight of Ben's life. He took pleasure in commending in verse the works of men not worthy of his notice and in lauding and patronizing poeticules like Filmer, Stephens, Wright and Warre, also Master Joseph Rutter--Ben's dear son (in a lettered sense) and right learned friend.

In his prefatory remarks to the reader in "Sejanus," there is the same display of excess of commendation. Ben Jonson writes: "Lastly I would inform you that this book

in all numbers is not the same with that which was acted on the public stage wherein a second pen had good share in place of which I have rather chosen to put weaker and no doubt less peasing of my own than to defraud so happy a genius of his right by my loathed usurpations."

According to Dryden, Ben Jonson's compliments were left handed. Nevertheless, the words "so happy a genius" have directed the thoughts of commentators to Chapman and Shakespeare. However, the person alluded to is not Chapman or Shakespeare, but a very inferior poet, Samuel Sheppard, who more than forty years later claimed for himself the honor of having collaborated in "Sejanus" with Ben Jonson. Compliments bestowed on inferior men of the elder time are in later times the reprisal of Stratfordian buccaneers. While many of Jonson's versified panegyrics on contemporary poets were retrieved by his withering contempt for many of them orally expressed or contained in his prose works "Shakespeare," a pseudonymous author being included among them, still to the club room called "the Appollo of the Devil's Tavern," come many who were numbered amongst the

most distinguished men of the day outside of literary circles as well as within who sought his fellowship and would gladly be "sealed of the tribe of Ben."

Clarendon tells us that "his conversations were very good and with men of most note."

The Countess of Rutland favored him with her friendship and patronage, but her husband, the loathsome Roger Manners, fifth Earl of Rutland, resented her encouragement of literary men, he rushing in upon her one day when Ben Jonson was dining with her and with violence "accused her that she kept table to poets." These harsh words were spoken to and of the daughter of Sir Philip Sidney by the Earl of Rutland, who in earlier days with the Earl of Southampton used to pass away the time "in London merely in going to plays every day.'

But for poets and playmakers Lord Rutland did not share Lord Southampton's liking for imaginative pleasure as "a dear lover and cherisher as well of the lovers of poets themselves." But instead thought it a degradation to his Countess "that she kept table to poets."

Elizabeth Sidney, Countess of Rutland,



said Ben Jonson "was nothing inferior to her father in poesie." In Beaumont's ear "every word you speak is sweet and mild."

But Sidney's peerless daughter, the Countess of Rutland, was never discovered dining with the play actor of Stratford. Why? May they not then compare the Shakspeare biographical data with the facts known concerning Ben Jonson, whose name and personality is inseparably connected with subjects of general literature, while more is known of the Stratford player's life than the lives of the poets.

But this availed not, because of the nihility of literary facts in the life of the Stratford Shakspeare. What strikes the reader most is the poverty of the so-called literary events of the Stratford player's life. There is nothing to show in the events that he ever wrote poems or plays. All is mere supposition and inference.

While there is comparatively a superabundance of biographical material of the non-literary sort which contrast strikingly with the activities of a poet, they do not compare with the well-known literary facts in the life of Ben Jonson, but denote a relation with land-

holder, money lender and share-holding actor, a relation which does not involve poet Shakespeare's identity.

I am convinced that Ben Jonson must have had vast native ability deeply rooted in classical literature. He had vast definite help from the ancients. The best parts of what he wrote Shakespeare would have been glad to own.

When Ben Jonson became inebrious he would "carouse and swill like a Dutchman." King James I, was also prone to such "belly cheer." In fact, it was a stock situation with His Majesty. We read, "When Christian IV of Denmark was at the Court of James I on a visit, there is extant an account of a court masque in which the actors were too drunk to continue their parts." But their Majesties were in blissful ignorance of the fact as they were both "half seas over," had drunk swinishly.

His Majesty was again "three sheets in the wind" when Beaumont's masque which was to have been performed at Whitehall on Tuesday evening, February 16th, 1613, to celebrate the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth to the Elector Platine. The stage mechanism was invented by Inigo Jones, who was also stage

architect for Chapman's rival masque, "The Middle Temple and Lincoln Inn," presented on February 15th, 1613.

Sir Francis Bacon is called "the chief contriver" of the Beaumont pageant, he permitting no one to share the tremendous expense with him. But the gentlemen masquers of "The Inner Temple and Grays Inn" went by water from Winchester House to Whitehall seated in the King's royal barge. The Royal family witnessed their approach. Chamberlain says, "They were received at the privie stayres" but it seems got no further—learning that the King was "sleepie" (laid under the table). They came home as they went without doing anything, much discouraged, "and our of countenance."

Ben was coarsely featured and his enemies rudely insulted him. But the bulky Englishman could have answered in words very like Woodrow Wilson's "favorite Limerick" that runs as follows:

"For beauty I am not a star,  
There are others more handsome by  
far;  
But my face, I don't mind it,  
For I am behind it;

It's the others in front that I jar."

Ben Jonson's love of wine bidding cannot be denied, "drink was one of the elements in which he lived," although he was not like King James I, who often became what the Satirist, Thomas Nash, called swine drunk, heavy, lumpish and sleepy. Still this outer condition was much the same, "When each line oft cost Ben a cup of sack."

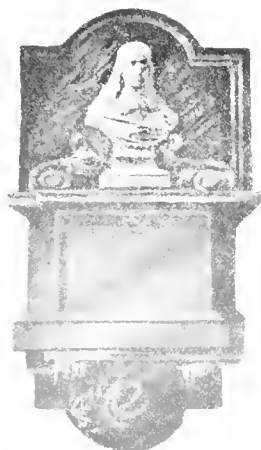
"Fetch me Ben Jonson's scull and fill't with sack rich as the same he drank when the whole pack of jolly sisters pledged and did agree it was no sin to be as drunk as he."

These occasional infractions of sobriety by Ben Jonson when he conversed with Drummond at Hawthornden in 1618-19, became habitual with him long before James Howell's invitation to a solemn supper by B. J. in 1636.

It is truly lamentable to think on the last days of Ben Jonson, subject to the brutifying power of wine, forsaken by the great when he stood most in need of friendship and good will, stripped of all his honors, his place as masque writer for the Kings' entertainments at Court, "supplied by one Townsend." Con-



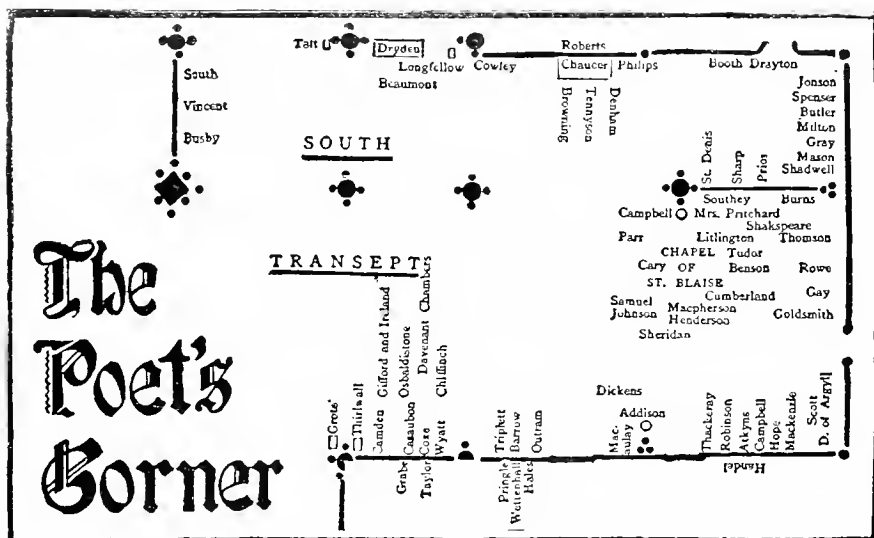
Ben Johnson



Milton



Spencer





fined by want and a fatal malady of a paralytic nature in a wretched lodging in an alley. The weariness of waning years seemed long and were dark and stormy.

And it is with a keen sense of pain and sorrow, of pity and regret we read the mendicant epistles addressed to several noblemen.

“He asked for bread” but when the summons came they bore him to the quiet resting place under the shadow of the “Cloudcapt Towers” of Westminster Abby and he received a stone. “O Rare Ben Jonson.”

WHO WAS SHAKE—SCENE?—(THE OBJECT  
OF ROBERT GREENE’S CENSURE)

## IX.

The prominence given to Robert Greene in the manuals of our literature, is not to make known the fact that he was one of the very few poets and dramatic writers who in a licentious age,—“left scarce a line that dying he need have wished to blot,” but instead, his character as usually framed by the critic is intended merely to cast obloquy on his mem-

ory, and to reveal by the hot breath of relentless scorn the unfathomable bitterness and raging hate of the commentators.

Henry Chettle imagined the dead poet's hand guiding his own in writing the following sentence: "There is no glory gained by breaking a dead man skull." When Chettle wrote these words in 1592, Robert Greene was dead, and, of course, could not reply to Gabriel Harvey's slurring aspersions. But his defender, Thomas Nash, with his satirizing pen, "possessed with Hercules furies," flamed with invective against the earliest calumniator of Greene's memory, and excruciated him with a trenchant irony which few have ever equalled, and probably no one has surpassed.

Robert Greene, like Marlowe, Burns and Poe—three among the "greatest inheritors of unfulfilled renown," died in the dawn of his manhood, distressed and neglected. Their lives became a tragedy in the sun-dawn of fame from habits of intoxication; they wrecked themselves by strong drink while the shadows still were inclining towards the west.

Robert Greene, although not a great world-poet like Robert Burns and Edwin Markham



who could rouse the thought of the people, still like them, he was the "poet of the common man," whose writings notwithstanding the laxity of the age, are unusually clean. But having an overpowering thirst for alcohol, he seems never to have answered "NO" to his evil, winebibber associates, so he fell a prey to the brutifying power of strong drink.

"He had faults, perhaps had many,  
But one fault above them all  
Lay like heavy lead upon him,  
Tryant of a patient thrall.  
Tryant seen, confessed and hated,  
Banished only to recall.  
At his birth an evil spirit,  
Charms and spells around him  
flung  
And with well concocted malice,  
Laid a curse upon his tongue;  
Curse that daily made him wretched  
Earth's most wretched sons among.  
He could plead, expound and argue,  
Fire with wit with wisdom glow;  
But one word forever failed him,  
Source of all his pain and woe;  
Luckless man! he could not say it,  
Could not, dare not, answer—No."

In this connection, without mincing matters, I wish to state a fact that you compre-

hend a man better after you know the sort of things his enemies tell about him, and the sort of things his friends tell about him. There is always something divulging about the admixture.

However, we would suggest that the critics and commentators with-hold their critical censure until it is positively known who the person was with a tiger's heart wrapped up in the hide of a player, and who thought himself the only "Shake-Scene" (jig dancer), before they abuse young Greene on account of a fanciful conjecture, by making his reputation a prey for carrion literary crows to peck at.

Our critics and commentators attempt to deduce his autobiography from passages taken from his novels, contained in the main in his reputed posthumous works. We know that Greene's last illness was sudden and of short duration, and he may have left a few it not "many papers," as Chettle avers, "in sundry booksellers hands." Among others, (probably) *The Black Books Messenger*, which was never finished as the death summons came before he could complete the manuscript. However, a short time before his death he had published a part of it,—

*The Life and Death of Ned Browne*, the supposed confessions of one of the most notorious cut-purses and scoundrels that ever lived in England, a man of gentlemanlike appearance who alternated between London and Flanders. He was at last hanged for robbing a church in France. *The Black Book* completely took in the public. Greene had planned the Confessions of another malefactor, which he intended to publish separately also but the second Confession never came into view though it seems to have been prepared. It was the first thing he said which he intended to publish after his recovery.

Mr. J. Churton Collins says, "that the *Repentance* bears a suspiciously close resemblance to *The Confessions of Ned Browne*, published by Greene a short time before and may have been interpolated with passages taken from that work," which Mr. Collins cites.

Compare the following excerpts out of the Coney-Catching Pamphlets, *Ned Browne* and *The Repentance*, by J. Churton Collins. (The Plays and Poems, Vol. 1, p. 51).

(1) My parents who for their gravitie and honest life were well known and esteemed amongst their neighbors. *Repentance*.

(2) Know therefore that my parents were honest of good reporte and no little esteem amongst their neighbors. *Ned Browne.*

(3) But as out of one selfsame clod of clay there sprouts, boath stinking weeds and delightful flowers, so from honest parents often grow most dishonest children, for my father had a care to have me in my nonage brought up at school that I—*Repentance.*

(4) (My parents) Sought of good nature and education would have served to have me made an honest man but as one self same ground brings forth flowers and thistles, so of a sound stock proved an untoward syon and of a venturous father a most vicious sonne, it bootes little to rehearse the sinnes of my nonage. *Ned Browne.*

(5) Young yet in yeares though old in wickedness, I began to resolve that there was nothing bad in that was profitable whereupon I grew rooted to all mischief that I had a great delight in wickedness as sundres, both in goodness. *Repentance.*

(6) For when I came to eighteen years old what sinne was it that I would not commit with greediness, why I held them excellent qualities and accounted him unworthy to live

that could not or durst not live by such damnable practises. *Ned Browne*.

(7) So that by their foolish persuasion the good and wholesome lessons I had learnt went quite out of my remembrance and I fell again with the dog to my old vomite. *Repentance*.

(8) So given over by God into a reprobate sense, I had no feeling of goodness but with the dog fell to my old vomit. *Ned Browne*.

*The Repentance* is probably the forging, in part at least, of its publisher, Cuthbert Burby, at that time a young man striving for bread and prominence. For Greene's name at that date was a name to conjure with, but Burby is silent as to how it came into his possession. The young publisher is the sole sponsor for the work. Those who had no confidence in the authenticity of *The Repentance* were Hazlitt, Ulrici, Brodenstedit and Collier.

The outcome of my scrutiny was a clear conviction that *The Repentance*, as a whole, is a soddy piece of rude forgery, more especially in passages where the pamphleteer in his own person, asserts his identification with Robert Greene by writing the name in full as in the sentence—"Robert Greene thou art damned." It seems strange that so many of

our critics should have been the victim of this gullery.

Mr. Collier was not convinced of the genuineness of the *Groatsworth of Wit* (Life of Shakespeare). We think these doubts well founded and the critics faked by daring fabrications. Accepting the very affecting *letter* to the playwrights addressed by Greene, with which the "Groatsworth" concludes, we may infer also that "*Groatsworth of Wit*" may have been compiled in part from certain papers, "The Confessions" of another malefactor, which Greene intended to publish upon recovery from sickness.

No wonder Burby and Chettle are in a hurry to bring out two such publications as *The Repentance* and *Groatsworth of Wit*, in their attempt to trade on Greene's name. For Greene was a very popular and many-sided author, beloved by the people. The most celebrated of the early pamphleteers, Francis Meres, ranks Robert Greene among "the poets who are the glory of England," also among the best comedians. If Meres may be trusted as a witness to the literary reputation of "Shakespeare," why not as a witness to the reputation of Greene's literary fame?

All doubt about the authorship of *The Repentance* seems removed by an impartial comparison with the Confessions contained in *The Black Book*. For the reputed deathbed pamphlet (*The Repentance*) bears a very close analagy to the supposed Confessions of Daredevil Ned Browne, whose villainy is read into Robert Greene's life by the fabricator of *The Repentance*, who had taken advantage of Greene's popularity with the reading public.

The critics manifest a very strong desire to read into Greene's life the depraved and villainous characters contained in the reputed autobiographical works, which are supposed to personate him in the opinion of his defamers, and to characterize him under every name known to knavery. In spite of that the purity of his writings refute the slander, as doth his sincere desire to serve the cause of virtue in the interest of good citizenship by his democratic sympathies.

He says: "Let thy children's nurture be their richest portion, for wisdom is more precious than wealth."

The pamphlets of Greene gave the London thieves and roughs a sudden scare and many were seized with a panic, for he was contin-

ually threatening to make known their names and send them to the gallows. He often wrote their initials with vacant spaces for inserting names, with —“I will not betray his name.” Greene tells us that he was in familiar intercourse with the rascals whose ways and tricks he describes, not as a comrade but as a secret agent to detect their knavery. Greene tells us also in the introduction, that he had in view the confessions of still another coney-catcher who had lately been executed at Newgate, but on reconsidering changed his mind, “because the man had died penitent.” He had hoped, he said, “to make out of the Newgate felon’s Repentance an edifying work which would be worth the regard of every honest person, which parents might present to their children and masters to their servants.”

Robert Greene was not “Lip-holy” or base enough to sham, for he was utterly above pretending to be what he was not, and could not have been the monster of iniquity that his enemies, drenched in hate, set forth after Greene was dead and could not answer.

Robert Greene was conspicuous among the writers of his day for versatility and quickness in composition, and the power of turning his



mind with ease to various subjects exemplified by,—“A quaint dispute between Velvet-breeches and Cloth-breeches.” The dispute is as to whether the courtier (Velvet-breeches), or the tradesman (Cloth-breeches), is entitled to the greater respect, and a jury of tradesmen is summoned to make a decision.

Now we may notice in this connection that the supposed Confessions of Browne and the supposed “Last Speech and Dying” words of Elliston, who was executed in 1722 for street robbery in Dublin, are strictly analagous. Dean Swift, in composing Elliston’s pretended dying speech, gave it the flavor of genuineness. Scott says it was “received as genuine by the bandits who had been companions of his depredations. The threat which it held out of a list containing their names, crimes and places of rendezvous, operated for a long time in preventing a repetition of their villanies.” Swift parallels Greene in his methods of warfare with the criminal classes and had the same salutary effect in producing consternation among the members of other gangs of these desperadoes which infested the city of Dublin.

Greene’s writings disclose his partiality to “The Man with the Hoe,” and reveal his

democratic sympathies that breathed into the coney-catching series, the soul of brotherhood, the spirit of civil humanity; in extending a brother's hand and a brother's heart to the poorer classes in their struggle against class distinction, social injustice; against the minions of tragic greed who believed in the "super-man" and against the doctrine of selfishness, pride, arrogance and self-conceit.

The popularity of the pamphlet was remarkable, it went through several editions in English. In 1621 it was translated into Dutch and published at Leyden, where it went through several editions also.

Greene made it the glorious opportunity when describing London's low-life to give flunkyism, as expressed by the names of Gabriel and Richard Harvey, a sudden chill, the Harvey Brothers, who had snubbed Greene and always stood scornfully apart from him and his circle. The second brother, Richard, was well known, both as an astrologer and a divine, who, according to Nash was "a notable ruffan with his pen," and had furnished two pamphlets to the "Martin Marprelate" discussion, as it was called, from the pen name. In them he had spoken disdainfully of Greene

and his friends, calling them "peperly-make plays and make-bates."

This it was which brought Greene into the field after the Harveys had raised a swarm of trouble for themselves unwittingly "to stir up a hornet's nest," and the prodding and stinging they got by 'hornet-like' Tom Nash was dreadful in its causticness. "Let sleeping dogs lie."

The Harvey Brothers were snobs. The eldest, Gabriel's, strong desire was to worm himself into favor among the aristocracy, to cover up his antecedents from the lower rank, and to treat his equals with derision and haunghty disrespect. Of this there can be no question,—with all his faults there was nothing of this weakness or snobbishness in Robert Greene, who had himself sprung from the common people though born to good condition.

Robert Burton, a contemporary, writing in "The Spacious time of Great Elizabeth," says that idleness was the mark of the nobility, and to earn money in any kind of trade was despicable. Gabriel Harvey flung in Greene's face the fact that he made a living by his pen.

In one of these fanciful studies in Eliza-

bethan literature, which I now hold in my hand, we may read that Greene has very vulgarly libeled Harvey's ancestry, but when we turn to Greene's book, we learn that the vulgarity consists in calling Gabriel Harvey's father a ropemaker. Only a snob would regard any honest employment as a degradation; still the lines which so mortally offended Gabriel were suppressed by Greene. "How is he (Gabriel's father) abused?" writes Nash. "Instead of his name, he is called by the craft he gets his living with."

Harvey was ostentatiously courting notoriety by the gorgeousness of his apparel, currying favor with the great, and aping Venetian gentility after his return from Italy. His inordinate vanity is best shown by his publication of everything spoken or written in commendation of himself by his obsequious friends and flatterers. Harvey writes, "Though Spenser me hath ofte Homer term'd," Spenser is here giving his college friend a send-off. But it seems strange that Spenser should have written the following line, "Ne fawnest for the favour of the great"—who was in effect as flunkish as Spenser himself—"tarred with the same brush," as Mr. J. C. Collins puts it.

Robert Greene's account of the repentance and reformation of a fallen woman is told in a way that discloses the poet's kindness of heart and fullness of humanitarian spirit and high ideal of womanhood. He assured his readers in the words of the woman herself, "that her false step gradually led her on to complete ruin," so heavy burdened with grief and shame that death seemed to her a benefaction and the grave the only place for perfect rest. Not a few there may have been who on reading Greene's story of the reformation and redemption of the unfortunate woman, were started on the path of regeneration.

I know not where to look for a word picture more conducive to virtue and friendly to reclaimed womanhood than this one framed by Robert Greene. When the light of these lives had been extinguished, the poor, unfortunate, erring ones had found a friend and helper—not in a "fish-blooded," pharisaical critic, but in a dissolute living man,—he saved others, himself he failed to save. Of all sad words, the saddest to me are those from a fallen woman: "I had no mother and we were so young."

In the manuals of our literature, great prominence is given to the fact that Greene

led a dissolute or irregular life, as if the debauchment of the author was transmitted by his writings. There are no indecencies in his works to attest the passage of a debauchee. Like many persons born to, and nurtured by religious parents, Greene doubtless exaggerated his own vices. It may truly be said of him that in regard to all that pertains to penitence and self-abasement, he spares not himself, but like John Bunyan, he was given to self-upbraiding. He (Bunyan) declares it is true that he let loose the rein on the neck of his lust, that he delighted in all transgressions against the divine law and that he was the ringleader of the youth of Elstow in all vice. But when those who wished him ill, accused him of licentious amours, he called God and the angels to attest his purity. No woman, he said, in heaven, earth or hell could charge him with having ever made any improper advances to her. Blasphemy and Sabbath breaking seem to have been Bunyan's only transgressions after all.

In Greene's writings we have the reverse of "Herrick's shameful pleading, that if his verse was impure, his life was chaste." Unlike Herrick, Greene did not minister to the

unchaste appetite of readers for tainted literature, either in his day or in the after time. Powerless to condemn Greene's writings, defamers would desecrate his ashes.

Deplore as we must Robert Greene's dissolute living, it was of short duration, for he went from earth at the age of two and thirty, and the evil effects have been lost in Time's abatement. His associates were probably as dissolute as himself.

Nash wrote,—“With any notorious crime I never knew him tainted and he inherited more virtues than vices.”

‘Whatever,’ writes Collins, “his life had been, he had never prostituted his pen to coarseness and licentiousness. His writings had been Puritanic in their scrupulous abstinence.”

Robert Greene expired on the third day of September, 1592. When the dead genius was in his grave, Gabriel Harvey gloated and leered with ghoulish glee, and wrote of Greene's “most woeful and rascal estate, how the wretched fellow or shall I say the prince of beggars, laid all to gage for some few shillings and was attended by lice.” This is one of Harvey's malignant, vitroilic discharges in

his attempt to spatter the memory and desecrate the poet's tomb.

Francis Meres of *Palladis Tamia* fame, a contemporary and ardent admirer of Greene, thus alludes to the ghoulish instincts of Harvey—"As Achilles tortured the deade bodie of Hector and as Antonius and his wife Fulvia tormented the lifeless corps of Cicero, so Gabriel Harvey hath shewed the same inhumanitie to Greene that lies full low in his grave." (*Palladius Tamia*, 1598).

But why should the modern reader linger over the irregularities of dissolute living authors like Greene and Poe, whose writings are exceptionally clean? The commentators and pharisaic critics who have written concerning Greene are mere computists of the poet's vices. When loud-mouthed detraction calls him bad-hearted, we should not forget that this dissolute man could and did keep inviolate the purity of his imagination. Few have left a wealthier legacy in feminine models of moral and physical beauty. Remember Robert Burns' noble words,—“What done we partly may compute but know not what resisted.”

In all the galleries of noble women,



Greene's heroines deserve a foremost place, for all the gracious types of womanhood belonged to Greene before they became "Shakespeare." His writings have assauged the sorrow of the self-sacrificing mother who is always a queen uncrowned, long-suffering and faithful.

There is no record extant of Robert Greene's living likeness. Chettle gives this pleasant description of his personal appearance: "A man of indifferent years, of face amiable, of body well proportioned, his attire after the habit of scholarlike gentlemen, only his hair was somewhat long, whom I supposed to be Robert Greene, Master of Arts."

Nash notices his tawny beard,—a jolly long red peak like the spire of a steeple which he cherished continually without cutting, where-at a man might hang a jewel, it was so sharp and pendant."

Harvey, who "was altogether unacquainted with the man and never once saluted him by name," says that 'He wore such long hair as was only worn by thieves and cut-throats, and taunts Nash with wearing the same 'unseemly superfluity.' "

The habit of wearing the hair long is not unusual with poets. Milton and Tennyson

cherished the same "superfluity," as did also the late Joaquin Miller. How dear to the "poet of the Sierras" were his tawny tresses resting on his shoulders, who could not be moved by persuasive words to part with them even from the lips of so worthy a friend as Ina Coolbrith, Poet Laureate of California.

Very little is known with any degree of certainty concerning the personal life of Robert Greene, and very little, if anything, in regard to his family or ancestry, although much prominence is given by imaginery writers to the history of his person in the hand-books of our literature. These writers attach an autobiographical realty to their dreams of fancy. They take advantage of Greene's unbounded sincerity and his own too candid confession in the address to the play writers, and of his own irrepressible desire to sermonize, whether in plays or pamphlets, with all the fervor of a devout Methodist having a license to exhort.

Had young Greene lived a longer life with all its wealth of bud and bloom, we should now have in fruition a luxuriance of imagination and versatility of diction possessed by few. With longer life he would probably have gained command of himself, for there was in

the poet's strivings, during the last few years of his life, the promise and prophecy of a glorious future. His soul enlarged, he battled for the common weal; his heart was with the lowly and his voice was for the right when freedom's friends were few.

In his play, "Pinner of Wakefield," first printed in 1599, Robert Greene makes a hero and a very strenuous one, of a mere pound-keeper who proudly refuses Knighthood at the hands of the king. "In the first scene of the play when Sir Nicholas Mannering appears in Wakefield, with his commission from the rebel Earl of Kendal, and demands victuals for the rebel army, the stalwart pound-keeper steps forward, makes the Knight eat his words and then his seal. 'What, are you in choler? I will give you pills to cool your stomach. Seest thou these seals? Now by my father's soul, which was a yeoman's when he was alive, eat them or eat my dagger's point, proud Squire.' The Earl of Kendal and other noblemen next appear in disguise and send their horses into the Pinner's corn to brave him. The pound-keeper approaches, and after altercation, strikes the Earl. Lord Bonfield says,—'Villain, what hast thou done?

Thou hast struck an Earl.' Pinner answers,—  
 'Why, what care I? A poor man that is true  
 is better than an Earl if he be false.' "

A yeoman boxing or cuffing the ear of an Earl! This has all the breezy freshness of American democracy.

The voice of the yeoman is often heard in Greene's drama, not as buffoon and lackey, but as freeman, whose voice is echoed at Naseby and Marston's gory field of glory, where the sturdy yeomanry of England strove to do and to dare for the eternal right—soldiers who never cowered from "sheen of spear" nor paled at flashing steel.

With Greene rank is never the measure of merit. To peer and yeoman he gave equal hospitality, for Robert Greene was as friendly to the poor man's rags as to the purple robe of king.

Greene in his popular sympathies is thoroughly with the working classes—"the great plain people of which Lincoln said that God must have loved them for he made so many of them." Greene never missed an opportunity to testify to the fact that "the souls of emperors and cobblers are all cast in the same mould." His heroes and heroines are taken

many of them from humble life. In the *Pinner of Wakefield*, there is a very clear discernment of democratic principle in the struggle against prerogatives. Half of those plays of Greene, which we still possess, are devoted to the representation of the life of the great plain people which gave lineage to Abraham Lincoln, John Bunyan and Ben Franklin.

## X.

However, if we would understand the matter in hand thoroughly we must concentrate our attention and thought intently upon the celebrated *letter* written by the dying hand of Robert Greene, and addressed to three brother poets, to whom he administers a gentle reproof on account of their bygone and present "faults," of which play-writing was most to be shunned. This remarkable *letter* reveals Robert Greene as the most tragic figure of his time—a sad witness of his ultimate penitence and absolute confession, a character of pathetic sincerity and weirdness, and charnel-like gloom that chills the soul. This letter, so often referred to, and seemingly so little understood, is one of the most extraordinary pieces of writing in our literary annals. It has all the credi-

bility that a dying statement can give, but it also evidences the fact that Robert Greene had previously drawn the fire of the improvising actors who wrought the disfigurement of the poet's work. There is one in particular at whom he hurls a dart and hits the mark.

"Yes, trust them not; for their is an upstart crow, beautified with our (poets) feathers, that, with his Tygers heart, wrapt in a Players hide, supposes he is well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being an absolute 'Johannes Factotum,' is in his own conceit, the onely Shaks-scene in a countrie."

This sorrow-stricken man wrote these words of censure with the utmost sincerity. Earlier biographers made no attempt to read "Shakespeare" into these lines of reproof, but those only of later times regard the allusion invaluable as being the first literary notice of Shakespeare and find pleasure in reading into Shakespeare's life the alleged fact of his having been satirized in 1592 under the name "Shake-scene" used by Greene contumeliously.

The letter is contained in a little work entitled "Greene's Groats Worth of Wit," "Bought with a Million of Repentance," originally published in 1592, having been entered

at Stationers Hall on the 20th of September in that year. "To those gentlemen his Quondam acquaintance, that spend their wits in making Plaies."

"With thee (Marlowe) will I first begin, thou famous gracer of tragedians, that Greene, who hath said with thee, like the foole in his heart, there is no God, should now give glorie unto His greatnesse; for penetrating is His power, His hand lies heavy upon me, He hath spoken unto me with a voice of thunder and I have felt He is a God that can punish enemies. Why should thy excellent wit, His gift, be so blinded that thou shouldst give no glory to the giver?" \* \* \*

"With thee I enjoyne young Juvenall, (Nash) that byting satyrist that lastlie with mee together writ a comedie. Sweete boy, might I advise thee, be advised, and get not many enemies by bitter words . . . Blame not schollers vexed with sharp lines, if they reprove thy too much libertie of reproofe."

"And thou (Peele) no less deserving than the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour; driven (as myselfe) to extreame shifts, a little have I to say to thee; and were it not an idolatrous oath, I would swear by

sweet S. George thou art unworthie better hap, sith thou dependest on so meane a stay. (theatre). Baseminded men, all three of you, if by my miseries ye be not warned; for unto none of you, like me, sought those burrs to cleave; those pupits, I meane, that speak from our mouths, those anticks garnish in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they all have been beholding, is it not like that you to whom they all have beene beholding, shall, were ye in that case that I am now, be both at once of them forsaken? . . .

"But now I return againe to you three, knowing my miserie is to you no news; and let me heartily intreate you to be warned by my harmes . . . For it is a pittie men of such rare wits should be subject to the pleasures of such rude groomes." (actors).

Those biographers and critics who have written concerning Shakspeare and Greene misapprehensively compound and integrate letter and pamphlet. It should be made clear that Greene's letter to his fellow poets is not an integral part of "Groats Worth of Wit," though appended towards the end of this pamphlet. The letter is strikingly personal and impressive, not a continuance of a pamph-



let describing the folly of youth, but a mere appendage not properly constituting a portion of it. It was the classical commentator, Thomas Tyrwhitt (1730-85) we believe, who first made current the groundless opinion that purports to identify "Shakespeare" as the one pointed at, but most all recent biographers and commentators state as a proven fact that Robert Greene was the first to bail Shakespere out of obscurity by the "reprehensive reference" to an "upstart crow," "Shake-scene." The effect of conjectural reading is to raise a tempest of depreciation by which "Shakespeare's" biographers and commentators have succeeded in handing down to posterity Greene's reputation as a preposterous combination of infamy and envy, harping with fiendish delight on the irregularities and defects of Robert Greene's private life, which were not even shadowed in his writings. The writings of Greene "whose pen was pure" are exceptionally clean. Why then this unmerited abuse so malignant in disposition and passion? We answer that it is because the biographers of "Shakespeare" have been seduced from the truth by a vagrant conjecture into the belief that "Shakespeare" was the object and recipi-

ent of Greene's censure. It is apparent that the statement which affirms this is false, and we shall endeavor to show that Robert Greene's detractors are on the wrong trail.

Before Tyrwhitt's day it was wholly unsuspected to Shakespeare's biographers, editors and commentators even by what Mr. George Saintsbury designates as "the most perilous process of conjecture" to what contemporary person Greene alludes, and now after the lapse of more than three hundred years after date, there is no real evidence—guesswork, pure and undulterated. When Nicholas Rowe, the first seventeenth century biographer and editor, gave his edition of Shakespeare to the public in 1709, Greene's letter to "the gentlemen, his quondam acquaintance" had been in print for 118 years. Nevertheless, Rowe does not find "Shakespeare" "satirized under the name Shake-scene."

The poet Pope, (1688-1744) was Shakespeare's second editor, but does not find Shakespeare's "literary pretensions ridiculed" by Greene. Lewis Theobald, the third editor, said nothing about Greene's "rancorous attack" so called on Shakespere.

Sir Thomas Hanmer, (1677-1746) the

fourth editor also says nothing about Shake-scene as an allusion to Shakespeare, or that he had been railed at by Greene.

In 1747, Bishop Warburton produced a revised version of Pope's edition. The Bishop failed to see in Greene's "only Shake-scene" a denunciation of Shakespeare. Dr. Johnson, (1709-83) the sixth editor is silent in regard to this tirade so styled against "Shakespeare." But Tyrwhitt, (1730-85) in guessing that Shake-scene is "Shakespeare," gave the Stratford delusion its highest flood, for his random opinion was accepted as a proven fact by many Stratfordians. We find the names of Malone, Dyce, and Halliwell-Phillipps among the dead; Sir Sidney Lee, Mr. Hamilton Wright Mabie and the Countess de Chambrun among the living. Not all Stratfordians hold that "Shakespeare was Shake-scene," for Mr. Fleay and Mr. Castle have shown that "Shakespeare" cannot be "Shake-scene."

But Mr. Lang says "only one such successful practising actor-playwright is known to us at this date (1592) and he is "Shakespeare." Unless another such existed, Greene in 1592 alludes to William Shak (&c) as a player and playwright."

My answer is that another such did exist in 1592. In the list of names before me given by Miss Phoebe Sheavyn—"The Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age" (p. 94) there are as many as nine persons who combined the two professions, the "equality" of player with authorship. Her list includes the names of Wilson, Munday, Rawley, Peele and Field.

And it seems according to a letter (W. P.—among Henslowe's papers at Dulwich College) that Peele occasionally trod the boards.

Sir G. G. Greenwood writes, "As I have shown George Peele was one of the playwrights addressed by Greene, and Peele was a successful player as well as playwright, and might quite truly have been alluded to, both as having 'facetious grace in writing' and being 'excellent in the quality he professed' that is as a professional actor."

And it is a very easy matter to prove that at least one such successful practising actor-playwright is known to us at this date (1592) and he is Robert Wilson, senior, who did unite the two professions as a player and playwright, who collaborated in sixteen plays, and has one or more ascribed to his sole authorship.

In 1598 a partnership was carried on be-

tween Wilson, Dekker, Drayton and Chettle. He was also a frequent collaborator with Munday. In 1598, Meres names Wilson among "our best for comedy." And still another tributary comment. In 1581, Wilson, one of Lord Leicester's men received an order for a play which included "all sorts of murders, immorality and robberies."

Robert Wilson was a famous extemporising clown actor; he was frequently called for after the play was over, when he performed a jig. He had license to introduce his own additions in rhyme or in the "swelling bombast of a bragging blank verse," as Nash called it.

Richard Tarlton and William Kemp were great performers in interludes. But neither Tarlton nor Kemp equalled Wilson as an author. In connection with extemporizing, Wilson's two interludes, "The Three Ladies of London" and "The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London," are excellent examples of his remarkable facility as an improvising clown player.

According to Collier, Wilson was not only an excellent performer, but also a talented dramatist, especially renowned for his ready repartee, and of his own anonymity says,

"Loth was I to display myself to the world but for that I hope to dance under a mask and bluster out like the wind, which, though every man heareth yet none can in sight descrie."

The fantastic tricks and foolery of the extemporizing clowns were the opprobrium of the public playhouse. Hamlet felt it and spake of it with regret in a well known passage; "And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the meantime, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villianous and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it." (Hamlet, Act III, Scene II).

The extempore actors referred to by Hamlet were Robert Wilson and William Kemp, or clown actors of their own clique, who accustomed the public to jigs and merriment and were the delight of the groundlings. But the improvising clowns proved an impediment to the development of higher dramatic composition, and were deservedly derided as "Shake-scene."

But nevertheless, are not all the conditions of the problem satisfied by Wilson's identification with Shake-scene, a hyphened compound word, which is used as equivalent to the performance of a jig dancer upon the stage who was a clown actor and jester, who can bombast out his own improvising in blank verse and who was true to name—Shake-scene.

So may not Robert Wilson, senior, be advanced for Robert Greene's reproof by all persons who are of the opinion that Shake-scene was both actor and playwright. Supposition says Kemp also wrote pamphlets and plays, although at this time he had not given his first and only work to the press. It matters little at whom Greene aimed, Kemp or Wilson, so long as Shakespeare was not the object of the aimer. We do not know positively who the only Shake-scene was, but we have in Wilson a good Shake-scene, and a good "poet-ape." "He takes up all makes, each man's wit his own."

We know that Wilson was able to do all the functions of Greene's Shake-scene, and possessed all the attributes that Chettle claimed for the person who had "factitious grace in writing." Wilson, however, is not equal to

both functions, as it was not possible for any known or unknown other to have been, for if heir to an opprobrious name (Shake-scene) he cannot be the recipient of Chettle's commendation, for his uprightness of dealing and his "factitious grace in writing" even if Shake-scene was a playwright-actor, "poet-ape," still he would be one of those "puppets as Greene says that speak from our mouths." In effect, Greene is saying to three of his old college chums, trust not the players for they "will leave you all in the lurch." For Robert Wilson and Will Kemp are now both extemporizing their own recitative composings in blank verse, and "their jiggings is much clapped at on the stage," and every improvising line in blank verse applauded, and one of these "painted monsters supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you, and being an absolute 'Johannes Factotum' (like Bob Wilson) is in his own conceit, the only 'Shake-scene' (dance-scene) in a country."

The present writer is of the opinion that Kemp and Wilson are about equally identifiable with Shake-scene, for the true import of Greene's words about an upstart crow done up



in a player's hide, should not be taken seriously. Greene's meaning is that the player, beautified with poet's feathers is bragging with a view to self-commendation, and being a "factotum" like all the other clown actors and jig dancers, boasts of his ability to bombast out blank verse by introducing his interpolated foolery and jiggery while the play is in action.

Inasmuch as Shakespeare had never been a clown player and jig dancer, his identification with an approbrious name (Shake-scene) seems to me impossible, and as the partizans of Shakespeare agree that Shakespeare was not one of Greene's quondam acquaintances "that spend their wits in making plays" he coculd not have been the recipient of Chettle's approbation, and is, of course, excluded, for Greene's letter was not written to him, therefore Chettle offers no apology to Shakespeare.

Young Hamlet and young Greene are in perfect accord in their estimate of the "groundlings who for the most part are capable of nothing but dum-shows and noise." And "those puppets also that speak from our mouths, those apes garnished in our colors," for Hamlet is scarcely less censorious when

galled as is shown by his bitter reproof of the extempore clown players for improvising matter of their own in rhyme or blank verse into the poet's plays. We have already seen that Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, regards the extemporizing clown and jig dancer as an interloper as to dramatic composition, characterizing the additions of the improvising clown as "villianous and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it."

Our prime object is to establish Wilson's and Kemp's eligibility as claimants for Greene's opprobrious "Shake-scene," thus barring out Shakespeare.

The prominence of Robert Greene's name in the manuals of our literature is due in the main to the kind of lies his critics tell about him in connection with "Groatworth Shake-Scene" allusion.

There now arises the crucial inquiry concerning the charge that Shakespeare was thus lampooned in 1592 by Robert Greene in his celebrated address to those gentlemen of his own fellowship that spend their wits making plays—inferentially, Marlowe, Nash and Peele. The exigency of the case demands, in the opinion of Shakespeare's modern biog-

raphers, the appropriation of Greene's reproachful reference to Shakespeare (though no name is mentioned.) The fanciful biographers of Shakspeare rely on these words of reproof and censure as being the initial notice of his worth and work which was to lift him from his place of obscurity in the year 1592. The meaning of Greene's words in the idiom of the times, as in their contextural and natural sense, yield nothing which is confirmatory of such contention; for "dance" is connoted under the term "shake," answering to the first element in "Shake-scene," which in the old meaning meant "dance," generic for quick action; and "scene" meant "stage" for the theaters were then in a state of absolute nudity—in other words, "Shake-scene" meant a dancing performance upon the stage. In the plain unobtrusive language of our day, as well as in Elizabethan English, the word "shake"—the first syllable in "Shake-scene" is interchangeable with "dance," and, when given a specialized meaning with a view to theatrical matters in the year 1592, with Kemp and Shakespeare claimants for Greene's reproof, who could doubt that the name which was so loudly acclaimed is identifiable with the spec-

tacular luminay of the times, Will Kemp, if Robert Wilson was not?

Greene says, "In this I might insert two more that boath have writ against these buckram gentlemen." Can these be identified? They cannot for there are no hints to supply a clue. But Mr. Fleay makes a guess which identifies the two as Wilson and Kyd; the former may have been one of the two "I might insert," but Kyd is barred by the fact that he had quit playwriting as early as 1589 "to leape into a new occupation." As Nash in 1589 puts it, he was in the service of a certain lord, (unnamed). We know that Lodge had also thrown up play-making for in 1589 he vowed to write no more for the public playhouse, Greene following suit probably soon after. At all events Kyd was not the object of the Groatsworth reference, he being no longer dependent on public stage hack work for a livelihood.

Thomas Kyd (1558-1594) was educated at Merchant Taylor's School, a fellow student with Edmund Spenser. Marlowe and Kyd were chums, at one time room-mates, helpful to each other perhaps in making plays, for Kyd excelled his more gifted and brilliant as-

sociate in plot construction and in surprising situations, but baneful to each other as chambermates. For in consequence of this intimacy the unfortunate Kyd was charged with atheism, owing to the discovery of a Theistic or Unitarian pamphlet among his papers, and is put to the torture in Bridewell.

Concerning the incriminating document, Kyd in writing to the Lord Keeper (Sir John Puckering), says,—“Some occasion of our wryting in one chamber two years synce (1591) some fragments of a disputation \* \* \* affirmed by Marlowe to be his were shuffled with some of myne (unknown to me).” But the informers called “State decipherers,” while rummaging amongst these waste and idle papers for compromising documents that concerned the State was found the “disputation,” in which the writer’s profession of faith is summed up in the words,—“I call that true religion which instructeth man’s minds with right faith and worthy opinion of God, and I call that right faith which doth creddit and believe that of God which the Scriptures do testify.”

The document is not atheistic but theistic, imbued with Socinianism. The writer rejects

the doctrine of the Trinity, the diety of Christ, but holds to the Unitarian or Socinian faith as held by Joseph Priestly, who made the epoch-making discovery of oxygen; the religion of William Ellery Channing and Thomas Star King, and their present representatives.

Kyd was arrested on suspicion May 12, 1593, of being guilty of a libel that concerned the State; "some outcast Ishmael," to use his own expression, puts authority upon the scent, so Kyd's study was visited but the authorities failed to find the libel that concerned the State. Instead was found an unorthodox paper which Kyd alleged to have been the property of Marlowe, which was regarded as *prima facie* evidence of the "deadlie thing"—atheism.

A week after his arrest on May 18, 1593, the Privy Council issued the warrant for the arrest of Marlowe. In the M. S. Register of the Privy Council we read,—“This day (May 20) Ch. Marley of London, gent, being sent for by warrant from their Lordships hath entered his appearance accordingle, for his indemnity therein and is commanded to give his daily attendance on their Lordship till he shall be licensed to the contrarie.”

How long Kyd remained in prison after his arrest on May 12, 1593, we do not know; however, the High Commission is much alarmed at the spread of atheism. The "State deciphers," gorged with perjury, have scented Kyd, who in self-defense tarnished his own fame by accusing Marlowe of heresy and blasphemy, an act of fear for which the modern world has no pardon.

We now direct the attention of the reader specifically to the arrogant and boastful comedian, Will Kemp. This man, according to Robert Greene's view, was the personification of everything detestable in the actor—whose profession he despised. We think the biographers and commentators have mistaken the spectacularity of Will Kemp for the rising sun of "Shakespeare," the author poet. In the closing years of the sixteenth, and the early years of the seventeenth century, there lived in London the most spectacular comic actor and clown of his day, the greatest "Shake-scene" or dance-scene of his generation, William Kemp, the worthy successor of Dick Tarlton. He had a continental reputation in 1589. This year also Nash dedicated to Kemp

one of his attacks upon Martin Marpelate entitled "An Almond for a Parrot."

There is ample contemporary evidence that Kemp was the greatest comic actor of his time in England, and his notoriety as a morris-dancer was so great that his journeyings were called dances. He was the court favorite, famous for his improvisation, and loved by the public, but hated by academic play-writers and ridiculed by ballad-makers. Kemp, in giving his first pamphlet "The Nine Days' Wonder" to the press in 1599, turned upon his enemies and in retaliation called them "Shake-rags," which he used derisively and as contemptuously as Greene had used "Shake-scene." The use of the word "Shake-rags" by Kemp in his first and only published work is *prima-facie* evidence that he also made use of the same term, orally and in his usual acrimonious manner, either against Greene, or those of his fellowship. The first element in the compound words "Shake-scene" and "Shake-rags" is governed by the same general law of movement or rhythmic action exemplified in dancing and rhymery. In 1640 Richard Brown in his "Antipodes" refers to the practice of jesters, in the days of Tarlton and



Kemp, of introducing their own wit into poets' plays. "Kemp, writing in 1600, asserts that he spent his life in mad jigs and merry jests," although he was entrusted with many leading parts in farce or broad comedy." His dancing of jigs at the close of a play gave him his chief popularity. "The jigs were performed to musical accompaniment and included the singing of comic words. One or two actors at times supported Kemp in his entertainment, dancing and singing with him. Some examples of the music to which Kemp danced are preserved in a manuscript collection of John Dowland now in the library of Cambridge University."

"The words were, doubtless, often improvised at the moment, but, on occasions, they were written out and published. The Stationers Register contains licenses for the publication of at least four sets of words for the jigs in which Kemp was the chief performer."

By way of confirmation, we will now quote in part, from the "Camden Society Papers," scenes in the life of Will Kemp.

According to Henslowe's Diary, Will Kemp was on June 15th, 1592, a member of the company of the Lord Strange players un-

der Henslowe and Alleyn, playing a principal comic part in the "Knack to Know a Knave," and introducing into it what is called on the title page his "Applauded Merriments," a technical term for a piece of theatrical buffoonery. In 1593 Nash warned Gabriel Harvey "lest Will Kemp should make a merriment of him."

As early as 1586, Kemp was a member of a company of great importance which had arrived at Elsinore where the king held court. He remained two months in Denmark, and received a larger amount of board money than his fellow actors. In a letter of Sir Phillip Sidney, dated Utrecht, March 24th, 1586, he says: "I sent you a letter by Will (Kemp), my Lord Leicester's jesting player."

It was after his return from these foreign expeditions that we find Kemp uniting his exertions with those of Alleyn at the Rose and Fortune theatres, as Prince Henry's servants. During this whole period from his return in 1586 from Denmark, to the year 1598, he did not stay uninterruptedly at the theatres of the Burbages. From February 19th to June 22nd, 1592, a part of Lord Leicester's company played under Henslowe and Alleyn. In 1602,

Kemp was again in London, acting under Henslowe and Alleyn as one of the Earl of Worcester's men. We gather from Henslowe's diary that on March 10th, he borrowed in ready money twenty shillings.

Kemp was a very popular performer as early as 1589. We shall see hereafter that he, following the example of Tarlton, was in the habit of extemporizing and introducing matter of his own that has not come down to us. "Let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them." (Hamlet, Act III, Scene II). These words were aimed at Kemp, or one of his school, and it was about this date, according to Henslowe's Diary, that Kemp went over from the Lord Chamberlain to the Lord Nottingham players. The most important duty of the clown was not to appear in the play itself, but to sing and dance his jig at the end of it, even after a tragedy, in order to soften the painful impression. (Camden Society Papers).

Kemp's jig of "The Kitchen Stuff Woman" was a screaming farce of rude verses, some spoken, others sung; of good and bad witticism; of extravagant acting and dancing. In the art of comic dancing Kemp was immoder-

ately loved and admired. He paid professional visits to all the German and Italian courts, and was even summoned to dance his Morris-dance before the Emperor Rudolph himself at Augsburg.

Kemp combined shrewdness with his rough manner. With a view to extending his reputation and his profits, he announced in 1599, his intention of dancing a Morris-dance from London to Norwich; but to his annoyance, every inaccurate report of his gambols was hawked about in publication at the time by book-sellers or ballad-makers, like "Kemp's farewell to the tune of Kerry Merry Buff."

In order to check the circulation of falsehood, Kemp offered, he tells us, his first pamphlet to the press (though at the time he was thought to have had a hand in printing the Anti Morelist plays and pamphlets—five pieces erroneously attributed to his pen). The only copy known is in the Bodleian Library. The title ran "Kemp's Nine Days Wonder," the wonder referred to being performed in a dance from London to Norwich then written by himself to satisfy his friends. A woodcut on the title page shows Kemp in elaborate costume with bells about his knees dancing to the

accompaniment of a drum and tabor, which a man at his side is playing. This pamphlet



William Kemp Dancing the Morris.

was entered in the Stationers Book, April 22, 1600. The dedicatory salutation to Anna Fritton, one of her Majesty's maids of honor, shows us how arrogant and conceited he must have been.

Kemp started at seven o'clock in the morning on the first Monday in Lent, the starting point being in front of the Lord Mayor's house, and half London was astir to see the beginning of the great exploit. His suite consisted of his taborer, Thomas Sly; his servant, William Bee; and his overseer or umpire, George Sprat, who was to see that everything was performed according to promise. Accord-

ing to custom, he put out a sum of money before his departure on condition of receiving thrice the amount on his safe return. His own fatigue caused him many delays and he did not arrive in Norwich until twenty-three days after his departure. He spent only nine days in actual dancing on the road.

Kemp himself on this occasion contributed nothing to the music except the sound of the bells, which were attached to his gaiters. In Norwich, thousands waited to receive him in the open market-place with an official concert. Kemp, as guest of the town, was entertained at its expense and received handsome presents from the Mayor who arranged a triumphal entry for him. The freedom of the Merchants' Adventures Company was also conferred upon him, thereby assuring him a share in the yearly income to the amount of forty shillings—a pension for life. The very buckskins in which he performed his dance was nailed to the wall in the Norwich Guild Hall and preserved in perpetual memory of the exploit, which was long remembered in popular literature.

In an epilogue, Kemp announced that he was shortly "to set forward as merily as I

may, whither, I myself know not," and begged ballad makers to abstain from disseminating lying statements about him. Kemp's humble request to the impudent generation of ballad makers, as he terms them, reads in part: "My notable Shake-rags, the effect of my suit is discovered in the title of my supplication, but for your better understanding for that I know you to be a sort of witless beetle-heads that can understand nothing but that is knocked into your scalp; so farewell, and crosse me no more with thy rabble of bold rhymes, lest at my return I set a crosse on thy forehead that all men may know that for a fool." It seems certain that Kemp kept his word in exhibiting his dancing powers on the continent. In Week's "Ayers" (1688), mention is made of Kemp's skipping into France. A ballad entitled, "An Excellent New Medley" (dated about 1600), refers to his returning from Rome. In the Elizabethan play, "Jack Drum's Entertainment" (1616), however, there is introduced a song to which Kemp's morris dance is performed. Heywood, writing at this period in his "Apology for Actors" (1612), says Will Kemp was a comic actor of high reputation,

as well in the favor of Her Majesty as in the opinion of the general audience.

There is also a tribute from the pen of Richard Rathway (1618); and Ben Jonson, William Rowley and John Marston make mention of him.

These facts and concurring events in the life of Robert Wilson and Will Kemp, convince us that Shakespeare was not, and that Kemp or Wilson was the person at whom Greene leveled his satire, by bearing witness to their extemporizing power and haughty and insolent demeanor in introducing improvisations and interpolations of their "own wit into poet's plays."

From the foregoing, it is evident that, at the time the letter was written, Will Kemp enjoyed an unequalled and wide-spread notoriety, and transient fame, extending not only throughout England, but into foreign countries as well.

And further, by reason of his great prominence, in a calling which Greene loathed, and despised, he was brought easily within the range of the latter's contemptuous designation; of "upstart crow" and "Shake-scene."



We have now reached the crucial matter of the address which, according to the speculative opinion of many of Shakespeare's biographers, contains all the words and sentences which they hope, when racked, may be made to yield support to their tramp conjecture that Robert Greene was the first to discover Shakspeare as a writer of plays, or the amendor of the works of other poets. The identifiable words, so called, are contained in the following sentences: "Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his Tygers heart wrapt in a Player's hide."

"Upstart crow" in Elizabethan English, meant in general one who assumed a lofty or arrogant tone, a bragging, boastful, swaggerer suddenly raised to prominence and power, as was both Kemp and Wilson after the death of Richard Tarlton (1589). In an epistle prefixed to Greene's "Arcadia" (1587), Thomas Nash speaks of actors "as a company of taffaty fools with their feathers;" and "The players decked with poets' feathers like *Aesop's crow*" (R.B) and again, "That with his Tyger's heart wrapt in a player's hide." Tiger in the plain language of the day stood

for bully, a noisy insolent man, who habitually sought to overbear by clamors, or by threats. These characteristics are identifiable with Kemp; but the biographers of Shakespeare are content to conjecture that Robert Greene's parody on the line, "Oh Tygers heart wrapt in a woman's hide" is not only a contemptuous reference to actor, William Shakspeare, but also a declaration of his authorial integrity by their assignment of "Henry VI, Part III," which was in action at the "Rose," when Greene's celebrated address was written.

There is *prima-facie* evidence that Greene authored the line, which he semi-parodied in the address, which is found in two places. It appears in its initial form, "Oh Tygers heart wrapt in a serpent's hide" in the play called "The Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York," and "The Death of Good King Henry the Sixth," and later with "woman," substituted for "serpent;" again, it is found in the third part of "Henry VI," founded on the true tragedy, which was acted by Lord Pembroke's company, of which, as Nash tells us, Greene was chief agent, and for which he wrote more than four other plays. "Henry VI, Part III," is generally admitted to be the work of

Greene, Marlowe and perhaps Peele. Furthermore, the catchwords in the lines parodied betray their author, which is a confirmatory fact. To borrow a citation from the pages of Dr. A. Grosart, "Every one who knows his Greene, knows that over and over again he returns on anything of his that 'caught on, sometimes abridging and sometimes expanding."

And in semi-parodying his own lines wrapt "Tygers heart" in several kinds of hides. "A passage to his partiality could not appear too often." It was "Shake-scene" (Kemp or Wilson) the improvising jig-dancer with his "Tygers heart wrapped in a player's hide," who bombasted orally his own improvisations and interpolations out in blank verse; therefore not necessarily a Playwright-Actor, but a brawling jaw-smith whom Greene wanted to hit.

In their great desire to discover Shakspeare as the author, the words "bombast out in blank verse," are seized upon by Shakespeare's commentators with evident greediness. But these words yield nothing in support of author-craft, for bombast or bombastry, in the idiom of the time, stood for high-sounding

words which might have proceeded from the mouth of a buffoon, clown, jester, mountebank or actor, whose profession was to amuse spectators by low antics and tricks, and whose improvisations and extemporizings were destitute of rhyme, but possessed of a musical rhythm called "blank verse." The words "blank verse" were doubtless intended for the ear of Marlowe, the great innovator, who was thus reminded that the notorius jig dancer and clown, Bob Wilson or Will Kemp, declaimed their own improvisation and interpolations in "blank verse," and was an absolute "Johannes Factotum in his own conceit"—that is, a person employed to do many things. Who could do more "in his own conceit" than Kemp, who spent his life in mad jigs, as he says? Who but Kemp, the chief actor in the low comedy scenes, who angered the acedemic play-writers by introducing "his own wit into their plays and make a merriement of them?"

Greene's address to his fellow playmakers does not convey nor give color to, nor the slightest circumstances for, the conjecture that "Shakespeare's authorial career had been begun as the amender of other poet's plays

anterior to the putative authorship of "Venus and Adonis."

Halliwell-Phillips, the most indefatigable and reliable member of the Congress of Speculative Biographers, says that not one such play has been found revised, or amended, by Shakespeare in his early career. Still in their extremity, Shakespeare's commentators give hospitality to stupid conjectures that are not reasonable inference from concurrent facts, and construe Greene's censure of Kemp or Wilson (inferentially) as the first literary notice of "Shakespeare." It shows, without proof, an irrepressible desire to confer authorship upon Shakspeare, the Stratford player.

The Shakespeare votaries cannot point to a single word, or sentence, in this celebrated address of Robert Greene which connects the contumelious name "Shaks-scene" (dance-scene) with the characteristics of either the true, or the traditional, Shakspeare.

The biographers of Shakespeare never grow weary of charging Robert Greene with professional jealousy and envy. The charge has no argumentative value, even if granting Shakspeare's early productivity as a play-maker, or the amender of the works of other

men, for Greene's activities ran in other lines; play-making was of minor importance, a sort of by-production of his resourceful and versatile pen. The biographers of Shakespeare are unfortunate in having taken on this impression, because there is *prima-facie* evidence that Greene had forsworn writing for the stage a considerable time before the letter was written; thus he followed his friend Lodge, who in 1589 "vows to write no more of that whence shame doth grow." Greene was a writer distinguished in several different directions.

The biographers and commentators, agreeing in their asperities, charge Robert Greene with envy, basing it conjecturally on the assumption of Shakspeare's proficiency as a drama-maker, notwithstanding the sincere and earnest words contained in his most pathetic letter, addressed to three friends, in which he counsels them to give up play writing, which he regarded as degrading, placing their very necessities in the power of grasping shareholding actors, and rendering it no longer a fit occupation for gentlemen. They fail to see the dying should be granted immunity from this ignoble and base passion.

Our own rule of law admits as good evidence the testimony of a man who believes himself to be dying, and so the letter states, "desirous that you should live though himself be dying."

Robert Greene's charge against "upstart crow" stands unshaken; Henry Chettle, the hack writer, and self-admitted transcriber of the letter, does not retract Greene's statement. He denies nothing on behalf of an "upstart crow," whoever he was, for the author of kind "Hearts Dreams," does not identify "Shake-scene" (dance-scene) with Shakespeare, who was not one of those who took offense. It is expressly stated that there were two of the three fellow dramatists, addressed by Greene (Marlowe, Nash and Peele).

Still we are told by Shakespearean writers that the dying genius was pained at witnessing the proficiency of another in the very activity (play-making) which he had come to regard as congruous with strolling vagabondism. He enjoined his friends to seek better masters, "for it is a pittie men of such rare wit should be subject to the pleasure of such rude groomes," 'painted monsters, apes, burrs, peasants, puppets,' not playmakers, but ac-

tors, who had been beholden to him and his fellow play-makers, whom he addressed.

There is another aspect in which the charge of professional jealousy presents itself to the mind of the reader; those who covet that which another possesses, or envies success, popularity or fortune. To charge Greene with envy is most uncharitable by reason of his versatility. Now what was there in the possession of William Shakspeare in 1592 that could have awakened in the mind of Robert Greene so base a passion as envy? The name Shakspeare or Shakespeare had no commercial value in 1592, for the Shakspeare of the stage is described many years after this date as merely a "man player" and "a deserving man." Note this admission by Dr. Ingleby: "Assuredly no one during the century had any suspicion that the genius of Shakespeare was unique. His immediate contemporaries expressed no great admiration for either him, or his works." There is not a particle of evidence to show that Robert Greene was envious of any writer of his time; nor had he cause to be; but the way his contemporaries and successors robbed and plundered him proves the reverse to be true.



“Nay, more, the men that so eclips  
his fame,  
Purloynd his plumes, can they deny  
the same?”

The fact is, “Shakespeare” the author, passed through and out of life without having attained the distinction, or celebrity, won by Greene in his brief career of but nine short years. The more truthful of Shakespeare’s biographers concede that the subject of their memoirs was not, in his day, highly regarded, and that his obscurity in 1592 is obvious. There was not the least danger of the author of “Hamlet,” “driving to penury” the dean of English novelists, Robert Greene, who was supreme in prose romance, a species of literature which appealed to the better class of the reading public. Rival-hating envy! Robert Greene cannot be brought within the scope of such a charge, for in 1592, he was not striving to obtain the same object which play writers were pursuing.

The fame of Robert Greene during his lifetime eclipsed that of his contemporaries. “He was, in fact, the popular author of the day. His contemporaries applauded the facility with which he turned his talent to account.”

"In a night and a day," says Nash, "would he have yearked up a pamphlet as well as in seven years, and glad was that printer that might be so blest to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit." Even Ben Jonson, "the greatest man of the last age," according to Dryden, had no such assurance if we may judge from his own account of his literary life, which shows that he had to struggle for a subsistence, as no printer was found glad, or felt himself blest, to pay him dear for the cream, much less the very "dregs of his wit." He told Drummond that the half of his comedies were not in print, and that he had cleared but 200 pounds by all his labor for the public theatre. When not subsidized by the court he was driven by want to write for the London theatres; he lived in a hovel in an alley, where he took service with the notorious play broker.

To such as he, reference was made by Henslowe, who in his diary records "the grinding toil and the starvation wages of his hungry and drudging bondsmen," who were struggling for the meanest necessities of life. This Titan of a giant brood of playwrights, in the days of his declension, wrote mendicant epistles for bread, and, doubtless, in his ex-

tremity recalled Robert Greene, the admonisher of three brother poets "that spend their wits in making plaies."

"Oh, that I might entreate your rare wits to be imployed in more profitable courses, and let those apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions." Greene was a writer of greatest discernment from the viewpoint of the people of his time, "for he possessed the ability to write in any vein that would sell." He only, of all the writers of his time, gave promise of being able to gain a competence by the pen alone, a thing which no writer did, or could do, in that day by writing for the stage alone. "He (Shakespeare) is the first English author who made a fortune with his pen," says the Hon. Cushman K. Davis in "The Law of Shakespeare." In the absence of credible evidence, Mr. Davis assumes that the young man who came up from Stratford was the author of the plays. The senator does not seem aware of the fact that Shakspeare the Stratford player was a shareholding actor, receiving a share in the theatre, or its profits, in 1599; a partner in one or more of the chief companies; a play broker who purchased and

mounted the plays of other men; and that he, like Burbage, Henslowe and Allen, speculated in real estate. He was shrewd in money matters and became very wealthy, but not by writing plays. Suppose that William Shakspeare of Stratford-on-Avon had authored all the plays associated with his name, that alone would not have made him wealthy. The price of a play varied from four to ten pounds, and all poet Shakespeare's labors for the public theatre would have brought no more than five hundred pounds. The diary of Philip Henslowe makes it clear that up to the year 1600 the highest price he ever paid was six pounds. The Shakespeare plays were not exceptionally popular in that day, not being then as now, "the talk of the town." Not one of them equalled in popularity Kyd's "The Spanish Tragedy."

Shakespeare was soon superseded by Fletcher in popular regard. Only one of the Shakespeare tragedies, one historical play, and eight comedies were presented at the Court of James First, who reigned twenty-two years. Plays, written by such hack writers as Dearborn, or Chettle, were quite as acceptable to princes. We know that Shakespeare's fame

was thrown into the shade, hid from view, before the end of the century by that of several play makers. Nevertheless Shakespeare's rehabilitation during the eighteenth century is to be ascribed to the closet and not to the stage.

Robert Greene's romances were "a bower of delight," a kind of writing held in high favor by all classes. Sir Thomas Overbury describes his chambermaid as reading Greene's works over and over again. It is a pleasure to see in the elder time Greene's writings in hands so full of household cares, since he labored to make young lives happy. Robert Greene's works express every variation in the changing conditions of life. The poetry of his pastoral landscapes are vivid word pictures of English sylvan scenes. The western sky on amorous autumn days is mantled with sheets of burnished gold. The soft and gentle zephyr blows over castled crag and fairy glen fragrant with the freshness of new-made hay.

He was a graduate of both universities, a man of genius, but did not live to do his talents full justice. A born story teller, like Sir Walter Scott, he could do good work easily and quickly.

Students of Elizabethan literature know that Robert Greene resisted the temptation to write in the best paying vein of the age, that of salaciousness, but who had like James Thomson,—“left scarcely a line that dying, he need have wished to blot.”

We glean the following from the pages of “The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare,” by J. J. Jusserand; “Greene’s prose tale, ‘Pandosto, the Triumph of Time,’ had an extraordinary success, while Shakespeare’s drama, ‘Winter’s Tale,’ founded on Greene’s Pandosto was not printed, either in authentic or pirated shape, before the appearance of the 1623 folio, while Greene’s prose story was published in 1588 and was renamed half a century later, ‘The History of Dorestus and Fawnia.’ So popular was it that it was printed again and again. We know of at least seventeen editions, and in all likelihood there were more throughout the seventeenth century, and even under one shape or another throughout the eighteenth. It was printed as a chap-book during this last period and in this costume began a new life. It was turned into verse in 1672, but the highest and most extraordinary compliment of Greene’s performance was its

translation into French, not only once but twice. The first time was at a moment when the English language and literature were practically unknown and as good as non-existent to French readers." In fact, everything from Greene's pen sold. All of his writings enjoyed great popularity in their day, and which, after the lapse of more than three hundred years, have been deemed worthy of republication, insuring the rehabilitation of Greene's splendid genius.

We are content to believe that almost all of the so-called posthumous writings of Robert Greene are spurious, and that but few genuine chips were found in the literary work-shop of the poet after his death. We accept the very striking and impressive address to his brother play-wrights.

We would not set down as auto-biographical the posthumuous pamphlets, even though of unquestioned authenticity, for in "The Repentance" is made to say, "I need not make long discourse of my parents, who for their gravitie and honest life are well known and esteemed among their neighbors, namely in the citie of Norwich where I was bred and borne;" and then he is made to contradict all

this in "Groatsworth of Wit," where the father is called Gorinius, a despicable miser. Greene is not known to have had a brother to be the victim of his trickery.

As "there is a soul of truth in things erroneous," there may be a soul of truth in the following letter, contained in "The Repentance."

"Sweet wife, if ever there was any good will or friendship between thee and me, see this bearer (my host) satisfied of his debt. I owe him tenne pounds and but for him I had perished in the streetes. Forget and forgive my wrongs done unto thee and Almighty God have mercie on my soule. Farewell till we meet in Heaven for on earth thou shalt never see me more.

This 2nd day of Sept., 1592.

Written by thy dying husband,

*Robert Greene.*"

The reader will notice the statement in the posthumed letter that the poet had contracted a debt in the sum of ten pounds, but there is nothing whatever about leaving many papers in sundry booksellers hands which Chettle averred in the address "To the Gentlemen



Readers Kind Hearts Dreame." If this were a fact, the bookseller doubtless would have been called upon; "see this bearer (my host) satisfied of his debt" and sweet wife would not have borne the burden while "booksellers felt themselves blest to pay dear for the very dregs of her husband's wit."

Those writers who express no doubt of the authenticity of the posthumed pamphlets, leave their readers to set down as autobiographical whatever portions of those pieces he may think proper. At the same time the trend of impulse is given the reader by the critics that he may not fail to read the story of the poet's life out of characters devoid of all faith in honesty and in virtue, while the author (Greene) is anxious evidently to point a moral by them and reprove vice. These forged pamphlets and so-called auto-biographical pamphlets make Greene accuse himself of crimes which he surely did not commit. There is not an atom of evidence adduced to show Francisco in "Never Too Late" was intended by the author for a picture of himself, and we do not believe that Greene wrote the pamphlet in the main in which

Roberto in "Groats Worth of Wit" is one of the despicable characters.

Greene's non-dramatic works are the largest contribution left by any Elizabethan writer to the novel literature of the day. "He was at once the most versatile and the most laborious of literary men." Famous, witty and brilliant, he was one of the founders of English fiction, and is conceded to be the author of half a dozen plays for the theatre. In them we have the mere "*flotsam and jetsam*" of his prolific pen.

## XI.

There is an explanatory piece of writing which should be read in connection with Greene's letter to 'divers play-makers.' We refer to the preface to *Kind Hearts Dreams*, written by Henry Chettle, which was registered December 8th, 1592. Chettle says: "About three months since died M. Robert Greene, leaving many papers in sundry book-sellers hands, among others his *Groats-Worth of Wit*, in which a *letter* written to divers play-makers is offensively by one or two of them taken." It seems that by 'one or two'

Chettle means *two*. "I had only in the copy this share—it was ill-written—licensed it must be ere it could be printed, which could never be if it might not be read. To be brief, I wrote over and as nearly as I could follow the copy, only in that *letter* I put something out, but in the whole book not a word in, for I protest it was all Greene's, not mine nor Master Nashes as some unjustly have affirmed."

The *letter* in question is the astonishing and affecting address of Robert Greene "To those Gentlemen, his quondam acquaintance, that spend thare wits in making Plays," with which the *Groatsworth of Wit* concludes, originally edited and published by Henry Chettle, three months after Greene's death in 1592, having been entered at Stationers' Hall on the 20th of September in that year. But the earliest known edition of this pamphlet was reprinted in 1596.

Inasmuch as we have Chettle's admission that "only in that *letter* I put something out," we can only speculate about the something put out. Was it something written in connection with the first object in Greene's *letter*? As an implication, yes. Chettle writes: "For the first whose learning I reverence and at the

purusing of Greene's book (letter) stroke out what in conscience I thought he in some displeasure writ, or had it been true yet to publish it was intolerable."

And yet this man (Chettle), with such a tender conscience, printed and published the passage, charging Marlowe, or the object of Greene's first reference—whoever he was—with atheism. The very worst that could be said of any person in the age of "Shakespeare" is contained in the words, "diabolical atheism," notwithstanding Chettle's statement that he had mitigated Greene's charges. The passage in question seems to have been printed in its entirety, nevertheless Chettle must have had peculiar notions about offenses "intolerable," for while in the act of freeing the *letter* from all objectionable matter, he fails to omit the passage,—“hath said in his heart there is no God.”

However, Chettle's statement fits best with the object of Greene's third reference (Peele)—“driven to extreme shifts”—(to write for the common players for a living), “dependent on so mean a stay (theatre), a dissipated dramatist whose habits of intemperance are often spoken of and may have furnished Chettle

matter for expurgation—"I put something out."

There is much that is opprobrious in the character of George Peele not disclosed in the passage in the *Groatsworth letter*.

However, Chettle could and probably did slash into the so-called Peele reference, for Peele is known to have been "off color," and if meant, affords Chettle a good chance to "put something out," which was "true, yet to publish it was intollerable."

Greene who never spares himself, did not we may be sure, fail to censure his friend Peele for an infraction of the moral law. Keep in mind that the earliest edition of *The Groatsworth of Wit* was printed and published in 1592, with the appended *letter*, but not a single copy of this earliest impression has been preserved. The edition of 1617—the critics only dependence—may not agree with the first edition of 1592. I am of the opinion that if we possessed a copy of the earliest edition (1592) it would be found to contain the matter which is "offensively by one or *two* of them taken," and should supply a clue and probably lead to identification, for the *letter* if discrepant would then speak for

itself, and perchance disclose the identity of the anonymous personage reported to have "factitious grace in writing."

All of Shakespeare's biographers and commentators aver that Shakespeare was not one of the three persons addressed. How then could Chettle's words bear witness to his (Shakespeare's) civil demeanor or factitious grace in writing? Mr. Fleay stated many years ago (1886) that there was an entire misconception of Chettle's language that Shakespeare was not one of those who took offense. They are expressly stated to have been two of the three authors addressed by Greene. The fanciful biographers of Shakespeare have evidently mistaken Chettle's placation of George Peele, or either of the three play-makers addressed by Greene, it does not matter which, for an apology to Shakespeare, who was not the object of Greene's satire or Chettle's placation.

Christopher Marlowe, the first great dramatic poet, was the father of English tragedy and the creator of English blank verse. He is, by general consent, identified with the first person address by Greene, "With thee will I first begin, thou famous gracer of tragedians,

who hath said in his heart there is no God. Why should thy excellent wit, His gift, be so blinded that thou should give no glory to the giver?" The second person referred to is identifiable with Thomas Nash, "With thee I join, young juvenall, that byting satyrist," though not with equal accord, as the first with Marlowe, as some few persons prefer to name Thomas Lodge. This predilection for Lodge is based on their having been co-authors in the making of a play ("That lastlie with me together writ a comedie"). This fact, however, signifies very little, for it is generally conceded that Marlowe, Nash, Peele, Lodge and Greene mobilized their literary activities in the production, in part at least, of not a few of the earlier plays called Shakespeare's.

However, the person reported to have "facetitious grace in writing," is not Nash, for Chettle writes, "With neither of them that take offense was I acquainted," but in writing to Nash, he signs himself "your old compositor." In 1589-90 Chettle set up Nash's tracts against Mar-Prelate, so it seems Nash was an old acquaintance, and therefore can't be

identified with the person reported to have "factitious grace in writing."

We are convinced that Lodge was not the person addressed by Greene as young juvenall. He was absent from England at the date of Greene's letter, 1592, having left in 1591 and did not return till 1593. Moreover, he had declared his intention long before to write no more for the theatre. In 1589 he vowed "to write no more for the stage." At Christmas time in 1592 he was in the Straits of Magellan. Born in 1550, Lodge led a virtuous and quiet life. He was seventeen years older than Nash, and four years older than Greene, who would not, in addressing one four years his senior, have used these words, "Sweet boy, might I advise thee." The youthfulness of Nash fits well. He was boyish in appearance. Born in November, 1567, he was seven years younger than Greene, and was the youngest member of their fellowship. The mild reproof "for his too much liberty of speech," contained in the letter, justified the belief that Thomas Nash was referred to as "young juvenall, that byting satyrist, who had vexed scholars with bitter lines."

Tom Nash was a great pet with the wits



of his day. He is referred to by contemporary writers; frequently one calls him "our true English Aretine;" Others describe him as "sweet Satyric Nash," "gallant juvenall," "his pen possessed with Hercules furies" and as "Railing Nash."

"His style was witty, though he had  
some gall;  
Something he might have mended,  
so may all;  
Yet this I say that for a mother's wit,  
Few men have ever seen the like  
of it."

The like accord and universal consent which identifies the first with Marlowe, identifies the third and last person, who had been co-worker in drama making of the same fellowship, with George Peele, "and thou no less deserving than the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferior," driven (as myself) to "extreame shifts, a little have I to say to thee." Chettle could, however, have borne witness to Peele "his civil demeanor and factitious grace in writing." Peele held the situation of city poet and conductor of pageants for the court. His first pageant bears the date of 1585, his earliest known court

play, "The Arraignment of Paris," was acted before 1584. "Peele was the object of patronage of noblemen for addressing literary tributes for payment. The Earl of Northumberland seems to have presented him with a fee of three pounds. In May, 1591, when Queen Elizabeth visited Lord Burleigh's seat at Theobalds, Peele was employed to compose certain speeches addressed to the Queen, which excused the absence of the master of the house, by describing in blank verse in his "Polyhymnia," the Honorable Triumph at Tilt. Her Majesty was received by the Right Honorable Earl of Cumberland."

In January, 1595, George Peele, Master of Arts, presented his "Tale of Troy" to the great Lord Treasurer through a simple messenger, his eldest daughter, "necessities servant." Peele was a practised rhetorician, who embellished his writings with elegantly-adorned sentences and choice fancies. He was a man of polished intellect and social gifts and possessed of a very winsome personality. "His soft, caressing woman voice" low, sweet and soothing, may have had a considerable effect upon Chettle, and could not have been unduly honored by Chettle's apology in wit-

nessing "his civil demeanor and factitious grace in writing."

George Peele took his bachelor's degree at Oxford in 1577. He was "a noted poet at the University;" his affiliations seem to have been with persons exalted in rank. He is discovered writing a poem in 1593 to glorify the installation of five Knights of the Garter; also a stirring farewell to Sir Francis Drake, and in the same year, 1589, a poem on the homecoming of Essex.

"His celebrations of the completions of thirty-second and thirty-seventh years of the Queen's reign on the 17th of November, 1590 and 1595, seem to indicate relations of the poet with the Court, and with the nobles of the Court." No wonder that he was exalted in character and regarded as excellent in the essential quality which "divers of worship have reported."

In his early use of blank verse, Peele began that reaction against the "jigging vein of rhyming mother wits." Peele was pre-eminently a poet of refined and amiable feeling, and there is *prima-facie* likelihood that Chettle saw in his demeanor no less civil than he was excellent in the quality he professes; be-

sides "divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing which argues his honesty and his factitious grace in writing that approves his art."

Peele's affiliation with "divers of worship" (persons ranked by birth above the common people) is a strong confirmation of the truth of our contention that there is identity of personality with the person reported on the evidence of "divers of worship."

Peele's identification with one of the three to whom Greene addressed, seems to me probable as the person to whom Chettle refers.

As Henry Chettle had been brought into some discredit by the publication of Greene's celebrated letter, and his admission that he re-wrote it, we know that the letter must have been surreptitiously procured as evidenced by its contents. The letter is as authentic, doubtless, as any garbled or mutilated document may be; but Chettle's foolish statement contained in his preface to "Kind Hearts Dreams" has awakened the suspicion, in regard to the authorship of "Groats Worth of Wit;" that, while the letter (or as much as Chettle chose to have published) is genuine, "I put something out," the pamphlet, "Groats

Worth of Wit" is spurious, in the main and evidently not the work of Robert Greene. Who can be content to believe Chettle's statement that Greene placed this criminating letter in the hands of printers, or that it was left in their hands by others at his request? A private letter, written to three friends, who have been co-workers in drama-making, calling them to repentance, charging one (Marlowe) with diabolical atheism! This was a very serious charge in those times, when persons were burnt at the stake for professing their unbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity.

Chettle was the first to make current the charge of atheism against Marlowe, the one of them that took offense, and whose acquaintance he (Chettle) did not seek. Chettle revenged Marlowe's learning, and would have his readers believe that he did greatly mitigate Greene's charge, but the contents of the letter as transcribed by Chettle and printed by the bookmakers, discredit Chettle's statement, as the charge of diabolical atheism was not struck out, and was, if proven, punishable by death.

There is no evidence adduced to show that Marlowe was indignant because of Greene's

admonition, contained in a private letter written to three play-makers of his own fellowship, but resented the public charge of atheism, for which he, Chettle, as accessory and transcriber, was chiefly responsible in making public. We know that Marlowe was charged with atheism at the time of his death at Deptford, for in May, 1593, following the publication of Greene's letter, printed at the end of the pamphlet, "Groats Worth of Wit," the Privy Council issued a warrant for Marlowe's arrest. A copy of Marlowe's blasphemies, so called, was sent to Her Highness, and endorsed by one Richard Bame, who was soon after hanged for some loathsome crime. But a few days later, after Marlowe's apprehension, they wrote in the parish book at Deptford on June 1st, "Christopher Marlowe slain by Francis Archer."

At the age of thirty, he, "the first and greatest inheritor of unfulfilled renown" went where "Orpheus and where Homer are."

The loss to English letters in Marlowe's untimely death cannot be measured, nevertheless, England of that day was spared the infamy of his execution. However, the zealots of those days found a subject, in Francis Kett,

a fellow of Marlowe's college, who was burnt in Norwich in 1589 for heresy. He was a pious, God-fearing man who fell a victim to the strenuousness with which he maintained his religious convictions. Another subject was found in the person of Bartholmew Leggett, who was burnt at the stake for stating his confession of faith, which was identical with the religious belief of Thomas Jefferson and former President William Howard Taft. The times were thirsty for the blood of daring spirits. The shores of the British Isles were strewn with the wreckage of the great Armada. In Germany, Kepler (he of the three laws) was struggling to save his poor old mother from being burnt at the stake for a witch. In Italy, they burnt Bruno at the stake while Galileo played recanter.

That Marlowe was one of the playmakers who felt incensed at the publication of Greene's letter admits of no doubt. He most likely would have resented the public charge of atheism. "With neither of them that take offense was I acquainted (writes Chettle) and with one of them (Marlowe) I care not if I never be." In such blood bespattered times, Chettle could and did write "for the first

(Marlowe) whose learning I reverence, and at the perusing of Greene's book (letter) struck out what in conscience I thought he in some displeasure writ, or had it been true yet to publish it was intolerable."

Chettle's conscience must have been a little seared, for he omitted to strike out the only statement of fact contained in the letter, which it would seem could have imperiled the life of Marlowe. The letter evidences the fact that all of that portion referring to Marlowe was not garbled, and that there was not any intolerable something struck out, but instead, as transcriber and publisher, he retained the fulminating passage, "had said in his heart, there is no God."

Notwithstanding Chettle's statement, we are of the opinion that the passage about Marlowe was printed in its integrity.

Chettle's having failed to omit the charge of diabolical atheism, reveals the strong personal antipathy he had for Marlowe. Few there are who set up Marlowe as claimant for Chettle's apology, and fewer still, who would not regard him worthy of the compliment, "factitious grace in writing," and whose acquaintance Chettle did not seek, but whose



fascinating personality and exquisite feeling for poetry was the admiration of Drayton and Chapman, who were among the noblest, as well "as the best loved of their time." George Chapman was among the few men whom Ben Jonson said he loved. Anthony Wood described him as "a person of most reverend aspect, religious and temperate qualities." Chapman sought conference with the soul of Marlowe.

"Of his free soul whose living sub-  
ject stood

Up to the chin in the Pierian flood."

Henry Chettle's act of placation is offered to one of two of the three play-makers addressed, and not to the actor referred to, who was not one of those addressed; therefore, "Shake-scene" could not have been the recipient of Chettle's apology, or placation, in whose behalf ("upstart crow") Chettle retracts nothing. The following reference is to one of the offended play-makers, pointed at in Greene's address, whom Chettle wishes to placate. "The other whome at that time I did not so much spare as since I wish I had—that I did not, I am as sorry as if the original

fault had been my fault, because myself have seen his demeanor no less civil excellent in the quality he professes; besides, diverse of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty and his factitious grace in writing that approves his art."

Chettle lost no time in transcribing the posthumous letter. Doubts as to "Groats Worth of Wit" were entertained at the time of publication. Some suspected Nash to have had a hand in the authorship, others accused Chettle. Nash did take offense at the report that it was his. Its publication caused much excitement and the rumor went abroad that the pamphlet was a forgery. "Other news I am advised of," writes Nash, in an epistle prefixed to the second edition of "Pierce-penniless," "that a scald, trivial, lying pamphlet called "Greene's Groats Worth of Wit" is given out to be of my doing. God never have care of my soul, but utterly renounce me, if the least word or syllable in it proceeded from my pen, or if I were any way privy to the writing or printing of it." We regard these words confirmatory of the fact that "Groats Worth of Wit" is not a work of unquestioned authenticity, and furthermore, that Nash did

not believe it the work of Robert Greene. *Prima facie*, it is spurious, for Nash spoke in high praise of Greene's writings. He neither would, nor could, have used the words "scald, trivial, lying" of a genuine work of Robert Greene, whose writings were held in high favor by all classes. Nash could not have taken offense at the allusion of Greene, which was rather complimentary though personal, and not intended for publication; but it did, however, contain some slight mixture of censure,—“Sweet boy, might I advise thee, get not many enemies by bitter words. Blame not scholars vexed with sharp lines if they reprove thy too much liberty of reproof.” Nash was very angry, but only because Greene's letter was given to the public by Chettle. But wherefore persist in the search if the person when found cannot be identified with Shakespeare. For note this admission by Mr. Lang himself—“If we take Chettle to have been a strict grammarian, by his words ‘a letter, written to diverse play-makers is offensively by one or two of them taken,’ William Shakespeare or Shakspeare or however you spell the name, is excluded; the letter was most assuredly not written to him.” (Shake-

speare, Bacon and The Great Unknown, p. 306).



AUTOGRAPH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

The letter and pamphlet both in Greene's handwriting would have been the best possible evidence of the genuineness of its contents and legibility. Chettle's not offering in evidence the original letter is strong presumptive proof of the commission of a forgery. He, if not the chief actor in the offense, was an accessory after the fact, and should, in his appeal to the public in defense of his reputation, have brought forward the pamphlet itself, embracing the whole matter, for examination and comparison; for we feel satisfied that such an examination would prove that the celebrated letter was authored and in the handwriting of Robert Greene, and not so ill written that it could not be read by the

printers, who must have been familiar with the handwriting of the largest contributor of the prose literature of his day. For ourselves, what we have adduced convinces us that the tract, "Groats Worth of Wit" was authored and written by one of Phillip Henslowe's hacks, presumably, Henry Chettle, an indigent of many imprisonments, who was always importuning the old play-broker for money. Since the tract, "Groats Worth of Wit," was in Chettle's own handwriting, he strove to fool the printers by transcribing Greene's letter and binding both together, through that "disguised hood" to fool the public. Abraham Lincoln is reputed to have said, "You may fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."

It is possible that Chettle may have fooled some of the people of his own generation some of the time, but in later times, through the misapprehension of his quoted words, he has fooled many of the Stratfordians all of the time. Chettle, however, would not permit the letter to come forward in its integrity and speak for itself, disclosing the nature of the intolerable something "stroke out."

The fact of the whole matter appears to be that Henry Chettle, wishing to profit financially by the great commercial value of Robert Greene's name, was accessory to the embezzlement and the commission of a forgery, and was the silent beneficiary of the fraud. The mutual connection of hack writer and pirate publisher is so obvious that a jury of discerning students, with the exhibits, presented together with the presumptive proofs and inferential evidence contextured in both letter and preface, should easily confirm our opinion of the incredibility of Chettle's statements contained in the preface to "Kind Hearts Dreams." The evidence of their falsity is, *prima-facie*, destitute of credible attestation.

We are made to see, in our survey of the age of Elizabeth, much that is in striking contrast with the spirit and activities of our time. There is a notable contrast between the public play house of those days, where no respectable woman ever appeared, and with the theater of our day—the rival of the church as a moral force. In the elder time "the permanent and persistent dishonor attached to the stage" and the stigma attached to the poets

who wrote for the public play house, attached in like manner to the regular frequenters of public theaters, the majority of whom could neither read nor write, but belonged chiefly to the vicious and idle class of the population. At all the theaters, according to Malone, it appears that noise and show were what chiefly attracted an audience in spite of the reputed author. There was clamor for a stage reeking with blood and anything ministering to the unchaste appetites.

The spectacular actor and clown were relatively advantaged, as he could say much more than was set down for him. Kemp's extemporizing powers of histrionic buffoonery, gagging and grimacing, paid the running expenses of the play house.

Phillips says: "It must be borne in mind that actors then occupied an inferior position in society, and that in many quarters even the vocation of a dramatic writer was considered scarcely respectable." In Ben Jonson's letter to the Earl of Salisbury, we can see very clearly that he regarded playwriting as a degradation. We transcribe it in part as follows:

"I am here, my honored Lord, unexamined and unheard, committed to a vile prison and

with me a gentleman (whose name may have perhaps come to your Lordship), one Mr. George Chapman, a learned and honest man. The cause (would I could name some worthier, though I wish we had known none worthy our imprisonment) is (the words irk-me that our fortunes hath necessitated us to so despise a course) *a play*, my Lord.

We see how keenly Jonson felt the disgrace, not on account of the charge of reflecting on some one in a play in which they had federated, for he protested his own and Chapman's innocence, but he felt that their degradation lay chiefly in writing stage poetry, for drama-making was regarded as a degrading kind of employment, which poets accepted who were struggling for the meanest necessities of life, and were driven by poverty to their production, and to the slave-driving play-brokers, many of whom became very rich by making the flesh and blood of poor play-writers their sustenance.

In looking into Philip Henslowe's old notebook, we see how the grasping play-brokers of the olden time speculated on the poor play-writers necessities, when plays were not regarded as literature; when the most strenuous



and laborious of dramatic writers for the theatre could not hope to gain a competence by the pen alone, but wrote only for bread; when play-writers were in the employ of the shareholding actors, as hired men; and when their employers, the actors, were social outcasts, who, in order to escape the penalty for the infraction of the law against vagabondage, were nominally retained by some nobleman. In further proof of the degradation which was attached to the production of dramatic composition, "when Sir Thomas Bodley, about the year 1600, extended and remodeled the old university library and gave it his name, he declared that no such riff-raff as play books should ever find admittance to it." "When Ben Jonson treated his plays as literature by publishing them in 1616 as his works, he was ridiculed for his pretensions, while Webster's care in the printing of his plays laid himself open to the charge of pedantry."

These facts and concurring events in the life of Robert Wilson and Will Kemp, convince us that Shakespeare was not, and that Kemp or Wilson was the person at whom Greene leveled his satire, by bearing witness to their extemporizing power and haughty

and insolent demeanor in introducing improvisations and interpolations of their "own wit into poets' plays."

## A CONTENTED MIND

Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content;  
 The quiet mind is richer than a crown;  
 Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent;  
 The poor estate scorns fortune's angry frown.  
 Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep,  
     such bliss,  
 Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss,  
 The homely house that harbours quiet rest;  
 The cottage that affords no pride nor care;  
 The mean that 'grees with country music best;  
 The sweet comfort of mirth and modest fare.

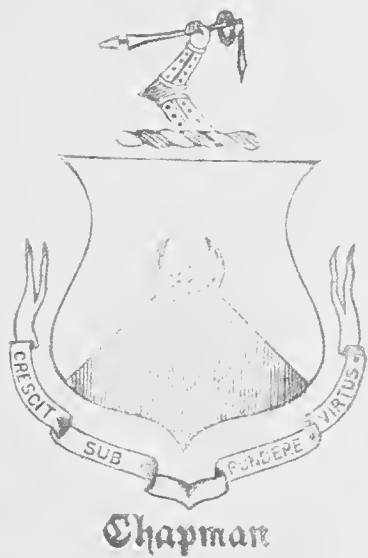
—*Robert Greene.*

"THAT OLD MAN ELOQUENT" (GEO. CHAPMAN)—"A BETTER SPIRIT"

## XII.

It may not be unacceptable to our readers for us to take this opportunity of presenting them with a slight sketch of the life of the great translator of Homer, George Chapman.

In miner's usage the Chapman lode is not a continuous ore-bearing vein. His apotheg-



Crescent Arms of Chapman.



matic sayings are disseminated through a large mass of quartzless porphyry contained in the early poems and in several of his plays; although considerable rich ore has been extracted from all of his original work as distinguished from the main vein or mother-lode, the bonanza poems comprising his Homeric labors.

However, the students of English poetry may find in every fissure or ledge in the grand old poet's veins excerpts for a noble anthology. George Chapman says, "Charles Lamb is a writer in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties."

That Professor Minto was correct in his identification of Chapman with the rival poet who supplanted the sonneteer (Shakespeare) in his patron's estimation, is the conviction of almost all sonnet critics. Chapman is thus conjecturally connected with "Shakespeare," who "evidently admired" the elder poet. A "better spirit" remarkable for "the full, proud sail of his great verse," and notwithstanding Shakespeare's manifestations of jealousy, was amongst the first of contemporary poets to recognize the beauties of Chapman genius. The statement "that the rivalry here

indicated was the outcome of bitter personal resentment, and may be traced elsewhere in the works of both authors," is essentially absurd and false, for Chapman would not have censured Shakespeare for his reference to him as his rival in the Sonnets (80-86); he would have regarded them as an appreciation.

Surely Shakespeare could not have been glanced at in Chapman's preface to his translation of the *Iliad*, as a certain "envious wind-sucker buzzing into every ear my detraction," for the elusive personality of "Shakespeare," author of the Poems and Plays is proof against the assumption that Chapman was ever the subject of "Shakespeare's" censure.

The terms in which George Chapman is commonly described by his contemporaries are of almost filial respect. He was among the few men whom Ben Jonson said he loved, "a person of most revered aspect, religious and temperate qualities."

It may be justly claimed for Chapman that he did his utmost to shun in all dedicatory verse the slightest imputation of fawning servility, choosing for patrons personal friends.

Chapman as a literary personality is obvious enough to the understanding of the reader,

for the poet and playwright lies directly in the way of the student studying Elizabethan literature. On the literary side he is manifested clearly in all his acts and deeds. Herein he contrasts with Shakspeare, the Stratford player whose biographers are much troubled at the scantiness of literary things that they can even conjecturally identify personally with "Shakespeare" author of the plays; while Chapman is sufficiently supplied with literary material and references adequate to the wants of his literary biographer, for there is no scantiness of information about him of the literary sort—common personal facts of everyday life are not the essentials in the lives of the poets.

We have the evidence of his own writings that Chapman was born at or near Hitchens in Herefordshire. The Hitchen Register only commences with the year 1562, three years after the poet's birth. While under the spell of his divine patron, Homer, who was "angel to him, star and fate" in reply to the poet's inquiry

What may I reckon thee whose heavenly look  
Shows not nor voice sounds. Man  
I am said he that spirit Elysian  
That in thy native ayre and on the hill

Next Hitchin's left hand did thy bosom fill  
 With such a flood of soul that then wert faine  
 (With acclamations of her rapture then)  
 To vent it to the echoes of the vale;  
 When meditating of me a sweet gale  
 Brought me upon thee and thou didst inherit  
 My true sense (for the time then) in my spirits  
 And I invisible went prompting thee  
 To those fayre greenes thou didst English me."

William Browne also in his *Britannia Pastorals* styles Chapman "The learned shepherd of fair Hitchin Hill." And from the title page of his *Homer* that his birth year was 1559. We do not know which of the several different families or branches of the great Chapman family he was connected with; we do not know the baptismal name of his father, nor the maiden name of his mother, or any fact relative to her parentage, nor anything relating to their domestic economy or occupation. We do not know that the poet ever married. Anthony Wood describes him as "a person of most reverend aspect, religious and temperate qualities, rarely meeting in a poet." No vile personal gossip sully his renown, a man of grave character and regular life.

George Chapman's name has not received due prominence in the modern hand books of



English literature, but he was a bright torch and numbered by his own generation among the greatest of its poets. He whom Webster calls the "Princes Sweet Homer" and "My Friend" was not unduly honored by the full and heightened style which Webster makes characteristic of him. "Our Homer-Lucan" as he was gracefully termed by Daniel, is a poet much admired by great men. Edmund Waller (1605-1687) poet, orator and wit never could read Chapman's Homer "without a degree of transport."

Barry is reputed to have said that when he went into the street after reading it, men seemed ten feet high. Coleridge declares Chapman's version of the *Odyssey* to be as truly an original poem as the "Faery Queen." He also avers that Chapman in his moral heroic verse stands above Ben Jonson, "there is more dignity, more lustre and equal strength."

Translation was in those times a new power in literature. By the indomitable force and fire of genius, Chapman has made Homer himself speak English by having chosen that which prefers the spirit to the letter. It is in his translation that the Homeric poems are best read as an English work. Out of it there

comes a whiff of the breath of Homer. It is as massive and majestic as Homer himself would have written in the land of the Virgin queen.

Chapman strives to transmute Homer's soul into written words with unexampled energy and sublimity, set forth with such wealth of glorious eloquence and grandeur of thought. He has added, says Swinburne "a monument to the temple which contains the glories of his native language, the godlike images and the costly relics of its past." "The earnestness and passion," says Charles Lamb, "which he has put into every part of these poems would be incredible to a reader of mere modern translations. His almost Greek zeal for the honor of his heroes is only paralleled by that fierce spirit of Hebrew bigotry with which Milton, as if personating one of the zealots of the old law clothed himself when he sat down to paint the acts of Samson against the uncircumcised."

It was the reflected Hellenic radiance of the grand old Chapman version to the lifted eyes of Keats flooded with the light which "never was on sea or shore." This younger poet sang:

"Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen,  
Round many western islands have I been,  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold;  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told,  
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne.

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold." \* \* \*

Chapman, though the recipient of patronage of Prince Henry and his Cynthian sister, Elizabeth "Queen of Hearts," nevertheless, no favor was shown him by the mob of sycophantic parasites at the Court of James. However, the old oligarchist was the first dramatic writer to challenge the principle of monarchy as a compliment to government in his declaration of republican principle contained in the daring words:

"And what's a prince? Had all been virtuous men,

There never had been prince upon the earth,  
And so no subject: All men had been princes.  
A virtuous man is subject to no prince,  
But to his soul and honor, which are laws  
That carry fire and sword within themselves,  
Never corrupted, never out of rule;  
What is there in a prince that his least lusts

Are valued at the lives of other men;  
 When common faults in him should prodigies  
     be,  
 And his gross dotage rather loathed than  
     soothed?"

When these words were written, James VI and I, had sat three years on the British throne. His Majesty was a slobbering, dirty, trembling, contemptible coward, an habitual drunkard. He wrote a book upon that strange delusion, witchcraft, in which he was a devout believer, and ordered Reginald Scot's famous work burned. Scot fortunately died during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, thus escaping burning at the stake.

The King's claim to freedom from all control by law or responsibility to anything but his own royal will was tantamount to laying the head of "Baby Charles" on the executioner's block and the final eclipse of the House of Stuart, that fated race.

No wonder Chapman rather loathed than soothes the King's gross dotage, for Ben Jonson and himself had been cast into a loathsome prison in the previous year by this most loathsome of British kings, merely because of Mar-

ston's waggery in the matter of "Eastward Hoe."

His Majesty had also, by way of exercising his power as King by Divine right, hanged a pickpocket on the journey from Edinburgh to London without any trial—a prelude to brave Sir Walter Raleigh's death, and presageful of the fate of "Faire Arabella (Stuart) Child of Woe." "A fouler judicial murder never stained the annals of any country," says John Fiske). (Old Virginia, Vol. I, p. 200).

Sir Thomas Overbury of the Middle Temple was not so fortunate.

The Earl of Southampton, writing to Sir R. Winwood on the 4th of August, 1613, says: "A rooted hatred lyeth in the King's heart toward him." (Rimbault Life of Overbury).

As to the King of England criminality:

James the First was, in matter-of-fact, the principal figure in all of the "poisonous and adulterous Villany Treachery blood and shame" in connection with the poisoning of Overbury.

The revelations disclosed by the annals of that dark and foul reign point unerringly at James the First, the sceptered murderer of Sir Thomas Overbury.

But Chapman and Jonson finding themselves in imminent danger of having their nostrils slit or at least their ears clipped in order to save their bodies from mutilation, addressed seven letters to noteworthy persons. Chapman's letter to the King is reprinted from the *Athnaeum* of March 30th, 1901. Mr. Bertram Dobell took them from a quarto manuscript, commonplace book of ninety leaves into which they had been copied together with other letters, petitions and documents dating between 1580 and 1613, says that "the writer or collector of the documents can have been no other than George Chapman."

Nevertheless, three of the six letters seeking release were written by Chapman. Two he wrote to the Lord Chamberlain and one To His Most Gracious Majestie:

"Vouchsafe, most excellent sovereign to take merciful notice of the submissive and amendfull sorrowes of your two most humble and prostrated subjects for your Highnes displeasure, Geo. Chapman and Ben Jonson, whose chief offenses are but two clauses and both of them not our owne, much less the unnaturall issue of our offenceless intents. I hope your Majestie's universall knowledge will

daigne to remember that all authorities in execution of justice, especiallie respects the manners and lives of men commanded before it, and according to their generall censures any-thing that hath scapt them in particular which cannot be so disproportionable that one being actuallie good the other should be intentionallie ill; if not intentionallie (howsoever it may be subject to construccion) where the whole founte of our actions may be justified from beinge in this kind offensive. I hope the integrall parts will taste of the same loyall and dutiful order which to aspire from your most Cesar-like bounties, (who conquered still to spare the conquered and was glad to offences that he might forgive).

“In all dijection of never-inough itterated sorrowe for your high displeasure and vowe of as much future delight as of your present anger, we cast our best parts at your Highness’ feet and our worst to Hell.

—“*George Chapman.*”

It appears that Chapman underwent a second imprisonment with Ben Jonson shortly after their release for a supposed reference to some person in a play. We are unable to as-

certain any of the details of Chapman's life unconnected with literature. We have glimpses of him during his life in London. But always in connection with literary work.

As a further illustration. In 1606 the French Ambassador Beaumont, writes to his master: "I caused certain players to be forbid from acting "The History of the Duke of Bir-on." When they saw, however, that the whole Court had left town they persisted in acting it, nay, they brought upon the stage the Queen of France and Madame de Vernevil, the former having first accosted the latter with very hard words, and gave her a box on the ear. At my suit three of them were arrested but the principle person, (Chapman) the author, escaped."

Christopher Marlowe while fleeing from a warrant issued by the Privy Council summoning him to trial on the discovery of an unorthodox paper—in which some real or fancied offense had been detected calls on his way (probably) to Deptford at the "harmless and pious study" of his dear friend George Chapman and persuades the elder poet to take up and continue the lover's tale of "Hero and Leander."



The poet was not then living who could have fitly completed the sublime fragment of Marlowe "that can give new splendour to the genius of Milton and of Shelley."

Chapman's command of English is something prodigious—great in the descriptive and in the simile and was the fittest to take charge of an incomparable fragment. It would have been hard to do better than he has done. Chapman's scholarship cannot be gauged by his translations; men of letters whether in prose or verse did not aim at severe correctness, furthermore no Poet of the age but Shakespeare has left us so many grave sentences or striking detached thoughts, so many quotable passages of lofty eloquence.

Chapman's friendships are said to be the strongest testimonials of his character—the devoted friend who when he "loved once, loved for a lifetime."

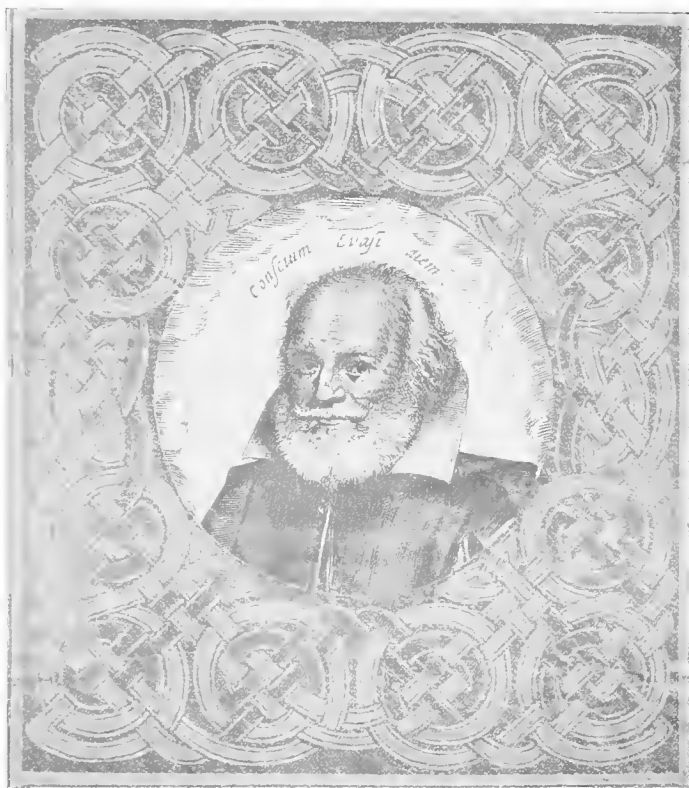
And we may add Chapman's close fellowship is Marlowe's best credential—that he was a man of good character. Let us his posterity enshrine him who in that "long gon time."  
" \* \* \* moved such delight. That men would shun their sleep in still dark night to meditate upon his golden lines."

There is also a copy extant of Chapman's memorable masque on the marriage of the Palgrave and Princess Elizabeth corrected by Chapman in his own hand. "But the errors are few and not very important. It shows the patient accuracy of the accomplished writer."

The Masque was performed at Whitehall by the societies of Lincoln's Inn and Middle Temple and mounted by Inigo Jones, Surveyor General of the royal buildings, who was employed in supplying the designs and decorations of the Court masques.

The marriage of Princess Elizabeth took place on the 14th of February, 1613, three months after the death of Prince Henry. From these ancestors his (present) Majesty George V derives his hereditary title to the British throne.

There is preserved a very fine copy of the Hymns of Homer, with some presentation verse with Chapman's autograph and an alteration or two in the engraving made with his pen. The engraved title by William Pass containing a portrait of Chapman at an advanced age. The engraving was designed, says Coleridge, by no vulgar hand. "It is full of spirit and passion." See portrait facing page 372.  
586



*George Eliot*



There is still extant a fine volume of the Iliad of 1611 in red morocco of the period. At the back of the title is in Chapman's autograph, "In witness of his best love so borne to his best deserving friend, Mr. Henrye Jones. George Chapman gives him theise fruites of his best labors and desires love betwixt us as long lived as Homer." The corrections are merely three or four in the Preface. Chapman has run his pen through the word "plasters" and substituted "plashes."

And still another interesting copy, 1608, with Chapman's autograph the "Seven Books of Homer's Iliads." In 1618 Chapman published his "Translation of Musaeus." The only known copy is in the Bodleian. It is dedicated to his exceeding good friend, Inigo Jones. He informs us in his poem that it is a different work to the continuation of Marlowe's poem. In 1618 appeared *The Georgics of Hesiod* and is dedicated to Sir Francis Bacon, Knight Lord High Chancellor of England. It had commendatory verses to My Worthy and Honored Friend, Mr. George Chapman, by Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton.

Chapman's personal character stood very

high and as a writer for the stage he attained great popularity in his day. The writings of his contemporaries are full of allusion to him. Much is known concerning Chapman's authorship of poems and plays for the list of passages extracted from his writings in "England's Parnassus or the Choicest Flowers of Our Modern Poets" contains no less than eighty-one.

At the time of this publication (1600) he had published but two plays and three volumes of verse. "The proud full sail of his great verse," (Chapman's Homer), had not at this time been unfurled. In 1611 he speaks of his yet unfinished translation of Homer, and we are told that the Prince of Wales had commanded him to conclude. The entry in the stationer's books is for this year. But the real date of the printing of the complete Iliad was doubtless the early part of 1612. In 1616 he published the Iliads and Odysseys collected into one volume, and then good old George could look on his completed version of Homer and say:

"The work that I was born to do is done."

There are frequent entries in Henslowe's Diary relating to advances of money made to

Received by me George Chapman for a pastoral  
ending in a Tragedy in sheet of manuscript for  
sum of forty pence the 10th of June  
1599

237 me George Chapman

Facsimile Receipt for 40s. paid for a "Pastorial Ending in a  
Tragidy" from Chapman to Philip Henslowe.

*British Museum. MSS. 30262.*





Chapman as playwright. We have sampled this one: On the 23rd of October, 1598, in an advance of £3 to Mr. Chapman on "his play boocke;" of this date also is the following memorandum in Henslowe's note-book, (page 191:)

"Be it known unto all men by these presents, that I, George Chapman of London, gentleman, doe owe unto Mr. Phillip Henslowe of the parish of St. Saviour, gentleman, the sum of X Xs of lawfull money of England. In witness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand this xxiiij of October, 1598. Geo. Chapman."

The records contain many references to Chapman's works, but this is not a literary biography, so our needs do not require their transcription for we now have at least the lineaments of his character, his genuine self.

Among gnomic poets, Chapman is in the front rank, a great master of English, a word smith he stands pre-eminent. "There are many more new words, says J. M. Robertson in Chapman than in Shakespeare."

The death of Prince Henry is regarded as the great crucial event of modern times, for it gave Charles the First the right-of-way to

the British throne followed by the servile minions of despotic rule which marked the beginning of the struggle against absolute monarchy, a death struggle between the upholders of royal prerogative and constitutional freedom. Although the pace had been set for the party of passive obedience by King James the First.

Chapman was patronized by Prince Henry that noble youth of the royal line to whom he was appointed server in ordinary and appears to have promised him a pension, but he died in 1612, in the nineteenth year of his age. His Majesty, the father of this promising young Prince was jealous of him, of course, by consequence no laureating or patronage in the Court of James for his old Homeric tutor and counsellor, George Chapman.

Prince Henry's name is preserved in the verses of sixteen poets, among them were Chapman, Jonson, Webster, Drayton, Donne, Daniel, Tounneur, Browne, Whither, Sylvester, Alexander, Davies of Hereford and Drummond of Hawthornden.

But not one line of mournful elegy from "Shakespeare." Everything tends and conspires to strip this person whomsoever he was,

of all literary work whatsoever as a self-ac-knowledged poet.

Prince Henry expired just before midnight on the 5th of November, 1612. In the passing of this youth at nineteen, of truly striking and rare promise so fervent in his friendship for Sir Walter Raleigh in his prison under sentence of death, and often said "that no man but his father would keep such a bird in such a cage."

Prince Henry dies, than which, says Gros-art, "no death since Sidney's had so moved the heart of the nation as none evoked such splendid sorrow from England's foremost names—with one prodigious exception and the one prodigious exception is Shakespeare."

So warm in his love and admiration for George Chapman, "The Prince's Sweet Homer," teacher and counsellor, who in one of his poems, the dedication of the *Iliad* to Prince Henry poured forth the exaltation of his own great art in his sublimest strain in such lines as these:

"Free sufferance for the truth makes sorrow sing,  
And mourning far more sweet than banqueting."

The Prince's death gave the good old poet a fiercer pang than any he had felt through years of struggle, well nigh of hunger—now feeling that the “pleasures of hope” were cut off by death of his only patron of the house of Stuart, the most magnanimous of them all. “To all times future this times mark extend Homer no patron found nor Chapman friend.”

Chapman's long life (1559-1634) overspread the whole of the Elizabethan Age of literature. His life began in advance of that golden age, before the dawn of English tragedy, with the rising sun of Marlowe, and lived to see it decline into a long and mellow even-tide which Shirley, “the last of a great age” failed to stay. One of the most learned men of his age, profoundly imbued with the Greek militant spirit, and of its earliest and most heroic inspirations, he best knew how to make Homer speak English. He gives a picture of Achilles and Ulysses full of life and action. “There did shine a beam of Homer's soul in mine.” This was the sovereign labour of his life,—a work which had won for him immortality.

But before there had wailed a dirge for

Chapman. His life-long friends, Marlowe, Beaumont, Drayton and Fletcher had in succession "passed the ivory gates." All these heirs to immortal fame he outlived on earth—George Chapman deserves a cenotaph in Westminster Abbey, where his illustrious friends lie or are commemorated. But it is to be regretted also, that the walls of the old Abbey do not enclose all that is mortal of John Fletcher, "in their tender and solemn gloom." Why should not the same roof cover all that is mortal of Beaumont and Fletcher, "Twin Stars" who in the morning of life had shared its hopes and aspirations; their names are indivisible, why not their dreamless dust thenceforward and forevermore.

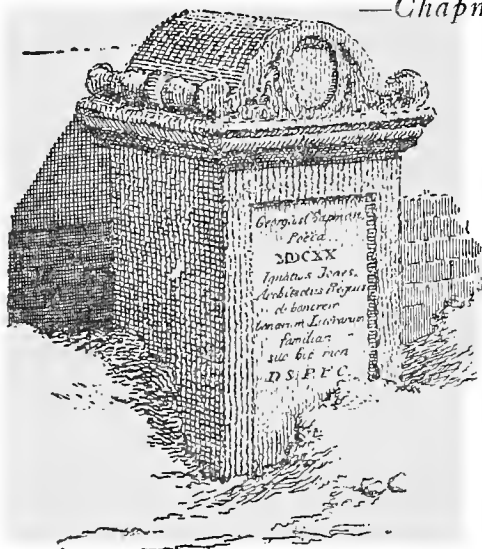
In May, 1634, now nearly three centenaries of years ago, in old St. Giles Churchyard, "Chapman's revered ashes were rudely mingled with the vulgar dust." But strange as it may seem William Habington's wish expressed in terms of filial veneration was never realized—no room is found "in the warm Church to build him up a tomb."

## A MASTER SPIRIT—PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF

Give me a spirit that on life's rough sea,  
 Loves to have his sails filled with a lusty wind,  
 E'en till his sail-yards tremble his mast crack,  
 And his wrapt ship runs on her side so low,  
 That she drinks water, and her keel ploughs  
 air,

There is no danger to a man that knows  
 What life and death is: there's not any law  
 Exceeds his knowledge; neither is it lawful  
 That he should stoop to any other law:  
 He goes before them, and commands them all,  
 That to himself is a law rational.

—*Chapman.*



Chapman's Tomb in St. Giles' Church.

# INDEX

## A

- Addenbroke, John**, 136, 138.  
**Aesop**, 221.  
**Alley, Edward**, 129, 130, 195, 234.  
**Archer, Francis**, 250.  
**Arden, Mary**, 106.  
**Aubrey, John**, 185, 250.

## B

- Bacon, Sir Francis**, 25, 279, 387.  
**Bagehot, Walter**, 15.  
**Barnard, Sir John**, 127.  
**Barnum, Phineas T.**, 225.  
**Beaumont, Francis**, 5, 12, 23, 31, 32, 199, 203, 241.  
**Bellet, H. H. L.**, 22.  
**Bellott, Stephen**, 86, 155, 162.  
**Belvoir**, 18, 19, 72.  
**Bentley, Dr.**, 226.  
**Betterton, Thomas**, 79, 112.  
**Bismarck, Prince**, 125.  
**Bodleian Library**, 103, 126, 387.  
**Bodley, Sir Thomas**, 102, 371.  
**Bown, Richard**, 322.  
**Brown, Sir Thomas**, 224, 226.  
**Browne, William**, 376, 390.  
**Bunyan, John**, 296, 303.  
**Burbage, Cuthbert**, 119, 120, 230, 231, 232.  
**Burbage, Richard**, 18, 97, 119, 129, 130, 171.  
**Burke, Edmond**, 223, 246.  
**Burleigh, Lord**, 170.  
**Burnet, Gilbert**, Bishop of Salisbury, 192.  
**Burns, Robert**, 282, 298.  
**Burton, Robert**, 126, 293.

## C

- Camden, William**, 24, 104, 241, 249.  
**Carew, Thomas**, 244.  
**Castle, E. J. K. C.**, 96.  
**Chambrun, The Countess de**, 37, 38, 309.  
**Chapman, George**—The Translator of Homer, 372, 375, 376 377.  
Conjecturally connected with Shakespeare as his rival (in Sonnets 80-86 "A better Spirit"), 373.  
A Poet much admired by great men, 197, 198, 200, 377.  
It is in his translation that the Homeric poems are best read as an English Work, 243, 267, 377, 378, 392.  
His command of English is something prodigious, 378, 385.  
As a writer for the Stage he attained great popularity in his day, 209, 279.  
There is no scantiness of information about him of the literary sort, 203, 241, 374, 375.

- Suffered from repression, 370, 383.  
 Imprisoned with Ben Jonson for reflections on the Kings  
 thirty pound carpet Knights of Scottish birth—in  
 "Eastward Hoe", 169, 380.  
 He was among the few men whom Ben Jonson said he  
 loved, 267, 374.  
 His letter to King James the First, 382, 383.  
 His fellowship with Mariowe—had a profound admira-  
 tion for, 363, 384, 385.  
 His Autograph and Facsimile Receipt, 389.  
 His appreciation of his mother-tongue, 373.  
 Familiar with several languages, 389.  
 The most Sententious of poets, 391,  
 "That Old Man Eloquent," 392.  
**Charles First**, 192, 380, 389.  
**Chettle, Henry**, 91, 93, 96, 231, 282, 284, 299, 350, 351, 362.  
**Clarendon, Earl of**, 276.  
**Clayton, John**, 134, 137.  
**Coke, Edward, Lord Chief Justice**, 25, 42, 59.  
**Coleridge, S. T.**, 243.  
**Collans, Churton**, 13, 14, 285, 294, 297.  
**Collier, J. P.**, 287, 311.  
**Combe, John**—the usurious money-lender, 45, 46.  
**Combe, Thomas**, his heir, 47, 55, 64, 65.  
**Combe, William**, 37, 42, 44, 48, 73, 75, 85.  
**Condall, Henry**, 129, 170.  
**Cook, Dr. James**, 109.  
**Coolbrith, Ina**—Poet Laureate of California, 300.  
**Corporation Stratford Records**, 45, 77.  
**Cromwell, Oliver**, 3, 31.

## D

- Dauce**—Scene, 321.  
**Daniel, Samuel**, 6, 185, 203, 377.  
**D'Avenant, Sir William**, 168, 169.  
**Davis, Cushman K.**, 341.  
**Day, John**, 267.  
**Dekker, Thomas**, 197, 198, 243, 251.  
**Derby, Earl of**, 193.  
**Dethick, Sir William**, 132.  
**Diggs, Leonard**, 160.  
**Donations of Constantine**, 228.  
**Donne, Dr. John**, 24, 267.  
**Dowland, John**, 323.  
**Druke, Sir Francis**, 25.  
**Drayton, Michael**, 5, 12, 104, 161, 162, 164, 170, 190, 387.  
**Drummond, William of Hawthornden**, 126, 162, 243, 245, 246,  
 248, 390.  
**Dryden, John**, 340.  
**Dyce, Dr.**, 134.

## E

- "Eastward Hoe," 16, 17.  
**Elizabeth, Queen**, 6, 7, 21, 31, 55, 380.  
**Ellismore, Lord**, 122.  
**Elton, Charles Q. C.**, 111.  
**Emerson, R. W.**, 12, 29, 134, 164.  
**Epitaph**, 33.  
**Essex, Earl of**, 5, 6, 19, 170.

## F

- Furmer, Dr.**, 131.  
**Fleld, Nathaniel**, 310.



**Fleay, Dr.**, 96, 185, 318.  
**Fletcher, John**, 13, 23, 31, 186, 203, 241.  
**Florio, John**, 125.  
**Ford, John**, 24, 31, 241.  
**Forman, Dr. Simon**, 28.  
**Francis, Sir Philip**, 223.  
**Franklin, Ben.**, 303.  
**Fuller, Thomas**, 201, 202.  
**Furness, Dr.**, 14, 334.

## G

**Greene, Robert**—His partiality to "The Man with the Hoe," 291, 302.  
 His democratic sympathies, 283, 292, 301.  
 The purity of his writings, 281, 289, 296.  
 He never prostituted his pen to coarseness, 297, 298.  
 He appealed to the better class of readers, 303.  
 He was supreme in prose romance, 292.  
 A born story-teller, 300.  
 His versatility and quickness in composition, 303.  
 His literary fame, 288.  
 He was the popular author of the day, 292, 300.  
 His gracious types of womanhood, 295, 298, 299.  
 The salutary effect of his methods of warfare with the criminal classes, 289, 290.  
 With him rank is never the measure of merit, 302.  
 "Not lip-holy," 290.  
 He was given to self-upbraiding, 296, 300.  
 He fell a prey to strong drink, 282, 283.  
 His character as usually framed by the critic, 282, 284, 289, 298, 307.  
 His opprobrious Shake-scene not Shakespeare, 308, 309, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 22, 330.  
 He counsels his friends to give up Play Writings—as degrading, 318.  
 He was one of the founders of English fiction, 285.  
 The great commercial value of his name, 288.  
**Greene, Thomas**—Represents the townsmen of Stratford-on-Avon in their struggle with Combe, Manwaring and Shakspeare (the "Vandals" of 1614-18) the three parties acting in unison in an attempted enclosure of a large part of the adjacent Common fields, 41, 47, 48, 49, 63, 71, 75, 77, 160.  
**Greenwood, Sir George G.**—His work "Is There a Shakespeare Problem?" cited, 82, 310.  
**Great Unknown, The**, 366.  
**Greys Inn**, 279.  
**Groats Worth of Wit**, 92, 96, 348, 349.  
**Grosart, Dr. A.**—On Prince Henry's Death, 333, 391.  
**Garrick, David**, 122.  
**Gauden, John**, Bishop of Exeter, 192.

## H

**Haglogton, William**, 393.  
**Hale, Sir Matthew**, 226.  
**Hall, Elizabeth**, 127, 128, 164.  
**Hall, Dr. John**—Shakspeare's son-in-law, 34, 71, 76, 109, 133, 160, 163, 164.  
**Hall, William**—an Oxford graduate, 36.  
**Hallam, Henry**, 12, 134, 164.  
**Hallwell, Philipps**, 35, 37, 53, 111, 129.

**Hammer, Sir Thomas**, 308.  
**Hamlet**, 9, 315.  
**Hart, Joan**, 127.  
**Hathaway, Agnes**, 66, 113.  
**Hathaway, Anne**, 66, 111, 112, 113, 128.  
**Hathaway, Richard**, 113.  
**Hatton, Lord Chancellor**, 25.  
**Harvey, Gabriel**, 292, 293, 294, 297.  
**Hemings, John**, 129, 170, 231.  
**Henslowe Diary**, 195, 196, 216, 234.  
**Henslowe, Phillip**, 195, 216, 233, 234, 235.  
**High Commission, The Court of**, 6.  
**Henry, Prince**, 31, 379, 386, 389, 390, 391.  
**Herald College**, 12, 131.  
**Herrick, Robert**, 296.  
**Heylin, Peter**, 195.  
**Heywood, Thomas**, 198, 217, 219, 220.  
**Heywood, Sir John**, 6.  
**Hobbes, Thomas**, 203, 241.  
**Homer**, 3, 10, 30, 73, 88, 387.  
**Howell, James**, 241, 243, 244, 280.  
**Hudibros**, 15.

## I

**Ingleby, Dr.**, 203, 218, 338.  
**Inner Temple**, 22, 279.  
**Irving, Sir Henry**, 171.  
**Irving, Washington**, 40.

## J

**Jaggard, William**, 217.  
**James The First**—Prefers his own writings, 55, 104, 267, 280, 380, 381.  
     George Chapman's letter to, 382, 383.  
     His Demonology, 380.  
**Jefferson, Thomas**, 361.  
**Jones, Inigo**—Great confidence placed in, 268, 278.  
     He was employed in arranging the scenery for the masques of Beaumont, Chapman and Ben Jonson, 386, 387.  
**Johannus Factotum**—(See Robert Greene "A Groatsworth of Wit.")  
**Johnson, Dr. Samuel**—lexicographer and critic, 247, 309.  
**Jonson, Ben**—He was born to poor condition in London, 249, 309.  
     Educated at Westminster School, 249.  
     He served as a Soldier in Flanders, 250.  
     His appearance, 242, 243, 279.  
     Not sensitive, 280.  
     Quarrels with Marston Deekker and Inigo Jones, 243, 251, 270.  
     A combatant in the "War of the Theatres," 209, 210.  
     Ridiculed for including plays among his "Works," 198.  
     Strong in his friendships and enmities, 241, 251, 252.  
     Never would let "Sleeping dogs rest," 254.  
     His poverty, 249, 269, 280.  
     Forced to sell library, 255, 268.  
     In the days of his adversity, wrote mendicant epistle for bread, 281.  
     Vilification and commendation of brother poets, 244, 265.  
     Ridicules Drayton and Shakespeare, 266, 267, 271, 272, 275.  
     His literary compliments are to be received with sus-

- picion, 247, 274, 275.  
 Spake disparagingly of Beaumont and Shakespeare, 256, 257, 270, 273.  
 His competency and credibility as a witness, 245, 246, 247, 257, 264, 273.  
 Notes of his conversations recorded by Drummond, 248, 265, 266, 267.  
 Who leaves the impress of his individuality, 242, 254.  
 The mass of literary detail respecting him, 254, 278.  
 Compared with the trifles and non-literary matter of no consequence that we know of Shakspeare, 242, 245.  
 His allusion to Elizabeth Countess of Rutland, 252, 253, 276, 277.  
 He collected a library rich in scarce and valuable books.  
   In this particular how unlike Shakspeare, 254, 255.  
 The superiority of literary reputation, 242, 254.  
 He united in a comedy "Eastward Hoe" with Chapman and Marston and was sent to prison, 252, 253.  
 His allusions to Shakespeare, 251, 258, 259, 261, 272, 273.  
**Junius Letters**, 192, 222, 223.  
**Jusserand, J. J. and Robert Greene**, 344.

## K

- Keats, John**, 378.  
**Keats, Francis**, 360.  
**Kemp, William (Will)**, 119, 205, 208, 311, 313, 314, 322, 327.  
**Kind Hearts Dreams**, 347, 348.  
**Kirk, Edward (E. K.)**, 189,—E. K.—195, 180.  
**Kyd, Thomas**, 213, 318, 319, 320.

## L

- Lamb, Charles**, 243.  
**Lalner, Sidney**, 14.  
**Landor, Walter Savage**, 197.  
**Lang, Andrew**, 11, 13, 14, 96, 123, 124, 128, 137, 205, 309, 310, 365.  
**Lee, Jane**, 186.  
**Lee, Sir Sidney**, 13, 14, 91, 111, 167, 203.  
**Lincoln, Abraham**, 139, 303.  
**Lincoln Inn**, 279.  
**Lodge, Thomas**, 190, 195, 354.  
**Lombard, Peter**, 6, 7.  
**London**, 76.  
**Lowell, James R.**, 185.  
**Lucy, Sir Thomas**, 79, 116, 117, 118, 125.

## M

- Mabie, Hamilton Wright**, 309.  
**Macauley, Lord**, 223.  
**Middle Temple**, 22, 28, 63, 279.  
**Malnwarling, Arthur**—one of the riators confederated with Combe brothers and William Shakspeare in an attempted enclosure of the Common fields, 42, 53, 55, 85, 87.  
**Malom, Edmond—quoted**, 91, 309, 369.  
**Manningham, John**—diarist records anecdote of Shakspeare, 23, 24, 28, 171, 235.  
**Marlowe, Christopher**—Was on terms of intimate friendship with Chapman, 385.  
   Suffered from repression, 282, 320, 321.  
   His imputed atheism, 359, 360, 361.

His Violent end of life with a foreknowledge of his untimely death at the stake—was his death self-administered? or was he slain by a serving-man one Francis Archer, which?

- Miller, Joaquin**,—California poet, 300.  
**Marston, John**, 169, 190, 243, 267, 268.  
**Masson, Prof. David**—on Shakespeare's reticence, 102.  
**Markham, Edwin**—American poet, 282.  
**Martin, Marnpilate**—a Mask-name, 292.  
**Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn**, 386.  
**Meres, Francis**, 180, 181, 182, 184, 185, 283, 298.  
**Mermaid Tavern**—Ben at, 241.  
**Merton College Oxford**, 167.  
**Middilton, Thomas**, 25, 267.  
**Milton, John**, 32, 41, 196, 299, 378.  
**Milato, Prof. William**, 373.  
**Montesquieu**, 192.  
**Mountjoy, Christopher, Wig-maker**—Prof. Wallace on, 86, 137, 157.  
**Mollere (Jean Baptiste Poquelin)**, 191.  
**Mulcaster, Richard**, 109.  
**Munday, Anthony**, 310.

## N

- Nash, Thomas**—Poet on informers, 196, 206, 212, 280, 297, 299, 354, 365.  
**Nash, Thomas**—marries Elizabeth Hall the grand-daughter of William Shakspeare, 127.  
**Nicholas, Cardinal de Cusa**,  
**Nine Days Wonder**, 327.  
**Norwich**—Kemp at, 322.  
**Northumberland, Earl of**, 356.

## O

- Outlines, Holliwell-Phillipp's**  
**Overbury, Sir Thomas**—Horribly murdered by poison Lady Essex and James The First being the instigators, 343, 381.  
**Ovid**—poet and a canon lawyer, 103, 104.

## P

- Peele, George**, 19, 93, 185, 310, 351, 357.  
**Pemhrook, Countess of**, 33.  
**Pembrook, Earl of**, 16, 19, 232, 231, 230.  
**Phillips, Augustine**, 122.  
**Poe, Edgar Allen**, 282, 298.  
**Pope, Alexander**, 308.  
**Privy Council**, 6, 74.  
**Public Record Office**, 87.  
**Puritans**, 41.  
**Pym, John**, 24.

## Q

- Quincy, Richard**, 121.  
**Quincy, Thomas**, 127, 133, 137.  
**Quincy, Thomas**, 109, 223.

## R

- Raleigh, Sir Walter**, 25, 170, 190, 381, 391.  
**Ripplingham**—Combe's agent, 44, 48.  
**Richard II**, 6, 7, 8, 216.  
**Robertson, J. M.**, 14, 15, 137, 389.  
**Rogers, Philip**, 135, 137.  
**Rathway, Richard**, 330.  
**Rowe, Nicholas**, 68, 79, 83, 112, 168, 308.  
**Rowly, William**, 310, 330.  
**Rutland, Countess of**, 16, 276.  
**Rutland, Earl of**, 14, 276.  
**Rutter, Joseph**, 274.

## S

- Salisbury, Earl of**, 369.  
**Scott, Reginald**, 226, 380.  
**Scott, Sir Walter**, 343.  
**Selden John**, 25, 102, 103, 104, 226, 241.  
**Shagsper, Willm**, 111, 112.  
**Shake-rage**, 95, 322.  
**Shake-scene**, 92, 94, 95, 284, 308, 314, 317.  
**Shake-Speare Shakespeare**—the author of the Plays a pseudonymous Name first assumed in connection with the Poems in 1593—in connection with the Plays in 1598—and in connection with the Sonnets in 1609, 17, 19, 77, 80, 101, 179, 180, 185, 186, 233, 262, 268, 299, 304.  
 Cannot be identified with Shakspeare the Stratford Player, 187, 188.  
 "The Poet"—was anxious to mask his identity under the name "Shakespeare" a pseudonym, why? Was he a man of rank or of high position in society? 189, 200, 201, 203, 219, 234.  
 Not attack by Robert Greene, 91, 92, 93.  
 Shake-scene not allusion to, 92.  
 Ben Jonson's allusion to, 259, 268.  
 Chettle supposed allusion cannot be a reference to, 96.  
 Not a single commendatory verse was addressed to the Poet on the production or publication of any of the Shakespeare Plays, 189, 31, 32.  
 His vocabulary (see the Literary Aspect), 179.  
**A Summary**—of some of the negative pregnant, 229, 203.  
 Such as the silence of Ben Jonson not so much as the least commentary upon the Author of the Plays until the Stratford Player had lain for years in the grave, 23, 203.  
 Also the silence of the diarest Maningham, 27, 28, 235.  
 The Silence of Sir Thomas Bodley, 102.  
 The Silence of John Selden, 25, 203.  
 The Silence of Inigo Jones, 203.  
 The Silence of Philip Henslowe, 395, 234, 235.  
 The Silence of Edward Alleyn, 234, 235.  
 The Silence of Beaumont and Fletcher, 23, 31, 203.  
 The Silence of Chapman, 202, 203.  
 The Silence of Drayton, 202, 203.  
**Shakspeare, William**—"Him who sleeps by Avon," 4, 5, 10, 11.  
 His parentage, 104.  
 Stratford-on-Avon His Supposed Birthplace, 101, 105, 122, 124, 125, 128.  
 His Baptism—And Nurture, 105.  
 Was he sent to school in boyhood? his biographers unable to tell, 107, 108, 109, 110.

- Known Facts of his life, 121, 122, 142, 159, 171.  
 His improvident and irregular marriage, 105, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116.  
 He hikes to London, 117, 118.  
 An actor, 205, 213, 218, 225, 229, 230, 231, 232, 245, 251, 261, 262.  
 Lived apart from his wife and children, 130.  
 A sojourner for many years in the house—shop of a wig-maker, 86, one Mountjoy in Silver Street, London, 143, 149.  
 Was a witness for the plaintiff in the case—Bellott vs. Mountjoy. His testimony of little value to the party calling him or to the Court of Requests, 146, 148, 150, 151, 152, 158.  
 Speculation in Real Estate, 121.  
 His harsh treatment of debtors, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141.  
 His litigious striving, 134, 135, 136, 140.  
 Conduct in money affairs, 160, 163, 121, 134, 157.  
 Becomes very wealthy, 108, 110.  
 His arrogant defiance of public interest shown by his persistent invasion of popular rights, 44, 61.  
 Was one of the men who sought the oppression of the townfolks by his attempt to seize the common lands—whom the Lord Chief-Justice Sir Edward Coke declared from the bench "defied the law of the realm," 41, 42, 43, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 74, 85.  
 The execrative epitaph cut on his tomb is a criminating memorial of his attempt to gain possession of the Stratford Common lands, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 75, 76, 77.  
 Was charged with obtaining "heraldic" honours by fraudulent representation, 5, 131, 132.  
 As a player takes unimportant parts in what are now termed the "heavy business," 119, 120, 123, 205.  
 His literary contemporaries had no conception of the actors intellectual supremacy if such he possessed, 103, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 144, 145, 163, 164, 165, 172, 200, 103.  
 Was one of "those deserving men and one of the partners in the profits of that they call the House" 119, 120.  
 His readiness to engage with Richard Burbage to work at the Earl of Rutland's frevolans device "Impreso" in 1613 for the small sum of 44s, three years before his death, 18, 19.  
 The spelling of his name not Spear-Shaking, 105, 142, 143, 188.  
 Never assumed the name of "Shakespeare" or the hyphenated Shake-Speare, 143.  
 Does not claim the "Shakespeare Plays," 9.  
 And his daughters illiteracy, 108, 109.  
 The bust in the Stratford Church the most trustworthy physical presentment of, 159, 160.  
 His Will, 63, 63, 66, 170.  
 Death and burial of.  
**Shakspere, John**, 106, 126.  
**Shakspere, Judith**, 108, 109, 126, 133.  
**Shakspere, Susanna**, 109.  
**Sheavyn, Phoebe**, 310.  
**Shirley, James**, 25, 241.  
**Sidney, Elizabeth, Countess of Rutland**, 276.  
**Sidney, Sir Philip**, 24, 82, 267.  
**Southampton, Earl of**, 26, 165, 167, 168, 170, 172, 173, 174.  
**Spedding, James**, 186, 203.  
**Spencer, Edmund**, 5, 170, 189, 241, 267, 294.

Star Chamber, 6, 54, 169.  
 Stevens, George, 83, 84.  
 Stopes, Mrs. C. C., 18, 71, 72.  
 Stevenson, Mr., 72.  
 Stratford Bust (see Frontispiece).  
 Swift, Dean, 291.  
 Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 27.  
 Symonds, J. A., 32.

## T

Taft, William Howard, 361.  
 Tarleton, Richard the player, 311, 321.  
 Tell, William, 226, 227.  
 Taylor, John, 267.  
 Thwaites, Edward, 36.  
 Tyrwhitt, Thomas, 93, 308, 309.

## U

Upstart, Crow, 92, 95.

## V

Venus and Adonis, 165, 214.  
 Voltaire (Francis Aronet), 191.

## W

Wallace, Dr. Charles William—his Shakspeare discoveries, 19,  
 52, 86, 87, 135, 136, 156, 137, 158, 159, 161, 162.  
 Wheeler Collection, the—Stratford-on-Avon 1806, 41.  
 White, R. G., 139.  
 Wilkins, George, 155.  
 Webster, John, 197, 198, 199, 200, 390.  
 Welcombe, 45, 53, 65.  
 Whateley, Anna, 111.  
 Wriathesley, Henry, Earl of Southampton, 5, 25, 165, 381.  
 Wilson, Woodrow, 279.  
 Wilson, Robert Senior, 310, 311, 313, 314, 330, 371.  
 Wood, Anthony, 376.  
 Worburton, Bishop, 309.

























